

*Astronomical  
wonders*



*Austin P. Torney*

Copyright 2010 Austin D. Torney

[austintorn@aol.com](mailto:austintorn@aol.com)

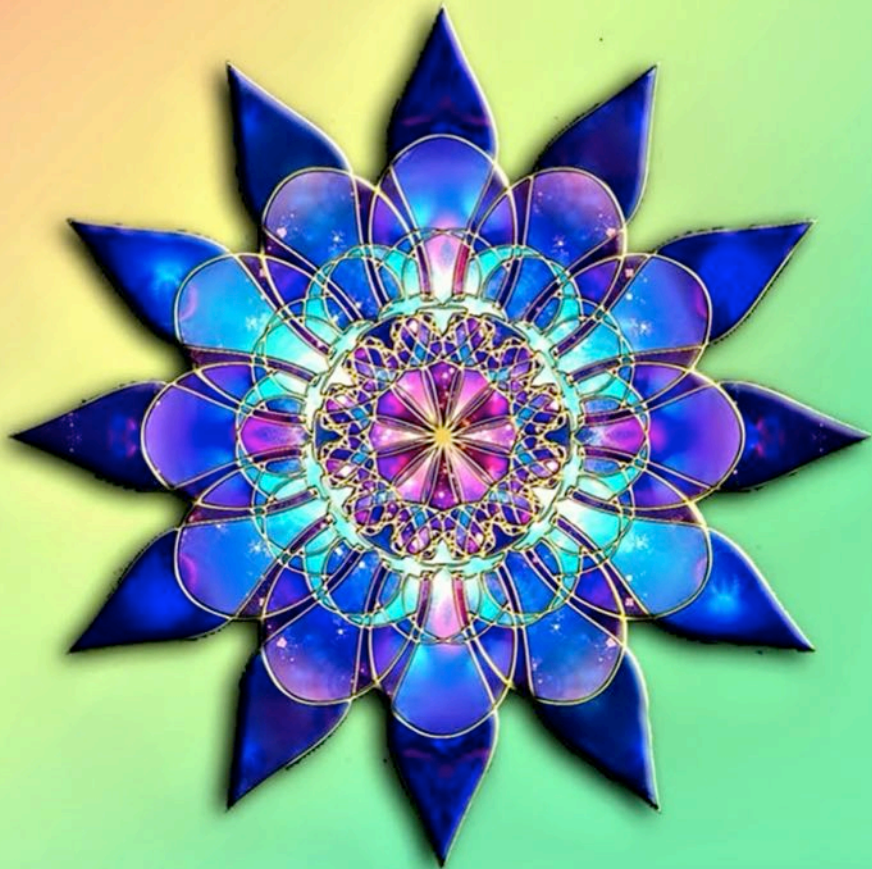
See Amazon for more books



# Astronomical wonders



Starry  
Memories



Above me, fires burn the stars away;  
Below me, the Earth turns under my feet;  
Within me, unworded dreams haunt my soul;  
Around me, night pours blackness on the ground.

Yet, inspiration returns with the stars—  
A thousand ideas beckon from afar;  
Ideas wink like fireflies on the mind's meadow—  
As starlight, they stab the darkness of naught.

The stars' light is the origin of our being,  
The source of our matter, energy—everything;  
Permanent, reassuring, and unquenchable,  
It's our radiant soul, our self-winding mainspring.

Soul to soul, it said to me, I'm the light,  
Thy spirit's sight, a beauty bold and bright,  
An inspiration come from darkest night;  
I'm a newborn star aglow with insight.

Oh thee, of thine, whence came this life of mine?  
I wish thee to thank for this living wine.  
Oh Nature, Father Time, Guiding Star—  
Thanks for throwing me an earthly lifeline.

Look at the stars in the depths of the night;  
Hold the flames in your mind, keeping them bright.  
Their power flows, energizing you from  
The Eternal Charger—you see the light!

Stars generate the lower elements;  
Supernovae generate the higher ones.  
Atoms form the molecules that lead to  
Life's complexity—from simplicity.

The stars are eternity's running lights—  
They shine, even through the fathomless night!  
From what bright star came the gleam in your eyes?  
To what distant sun returns your smile's light?

Born of stardust and nourished by sunlight,  
I fill my cup with wonders of delight.  
Life is a treasure, a radiant gem,  
A vision that I'll never see again.

From Heaven's stars came our dust eterne;  
Time's seas nurtured thee and thine in turn.  
From time, death, and dust we thus became,  
And by this, thus, and that we must return.

Purgatory's on Venus, where sulphurs rain.  
Hell's found in the sun's heart, oh, hot burning pain!  
Of Heaven's site, no one has any idea—  
It's the world's best kept secret: Earth's its name!

Earth's a garden, an oasis in space,  
A world of boundless beauty and grace.  
One could search the heavens for such in vain,  
Finding no equal, anytime or anyplace.



Elves find Venus shining in broad daylight,  
Knowing where to look as if it were night,  
Then follow her as the evening star,  
Till with her fiery lover she takes flight.

Just before dawn, amid the dew and moss,  
Elves ride on a moonbeam made of Bugloss,  
And see the North Star and the Southern Cross  
In the same sky, 'most all the way across.

The sun fills the waking and breathing world  
With the fire of her imagination.  
In poetry, the sun is the power behind the mind;  
The moon, planets, and stars are symbols, too.

Sometimes intellectual beauty is bright  
And ideas gush from the eternal flame;  
Sometimes it fails when the shadows of clouds  
Dim the clarity of thought now and then.

Quenchless, boundless, ever bright and burning,  
The mind's light searches every dark cavern,  
Probing, imagining—its beam alighting  
Upon the earth or high atop cloud mist,

And melts, with heat, energy, and desire,  
The fog of lone reason and pure passion,  
Burning it away, soft dissolving it  
With the love of life, earth, mankind, and star—





From which comes adventure, friendship, delight,  
Joy, success, triumph, and lasting gladness  
Throughout the sun's journey into the night,  
When stars shine on mind—suns they also are!

The moon fills the sleeping and breathing world  
With the icy coolness of chaste reason  
Unaffected by deep burning passions,  
Although sun-lit to glow in its wan light.

Reason, unsteady as the variant moon,  
Oft does not rise in the night to guide us,  
And deserts us in darkest times of woe;  
We are alone on a black cloud-bound night!

Else the moon hides in the bright light of day,  
Or is lost behind an overcast sky;  
But, moonless nights take us beyond reason  
When the stars excite us with their lights.

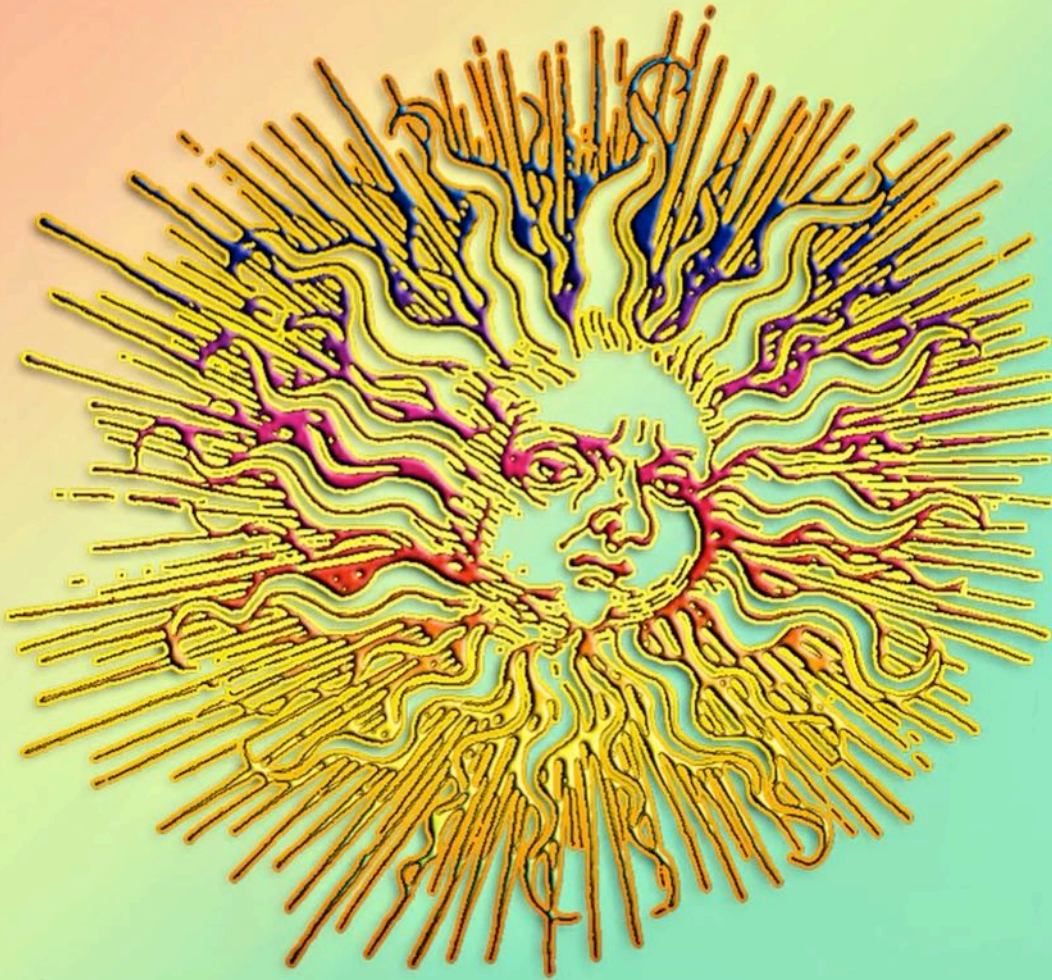
Yes, inspiration returns with the stars—  
A thousand ideas beckon from afar;  
Ideas wink like fireflies on the mind's meadow—  
As starlight they stab the darkness of nought,

Until star-like Venus rises near dawn.  
Goddess of romantic love and passion,  
She captures us within emotion's swell,  
While comets flash and confuse the wild sky.



Soon intellectual beauty returns,  
Borne on birds' wings as song into the dawn,  
for, all human music is but a part  
Of earth's ancient melody and rhythm.

Imagination now soars past a day,  
And into the season of spring's fast growth;  
The shade is deep and cool, like the ghost of  
Winter passing—gone but still remembered.





## New 9th Planet found!

Poor Pluto's been banished to the underworld,  
Charon rowing him to the land of the forgotten.  
Schoolchildren petitioned for his return,  
But he was voted off of the solar island.

Memory's crutch for the order of the planets,  
Is now just "MVENJSUN"—  
Old Pluto tried so darn hard, its position  
Now even closer to the sun than Neptune's.

Well, many have searched for quite a while for  
The next planet without any success—  
There have been hoaxes, theories, and some ghosts;  
Yet, I have firm proof of another planet.

But, first, a review of some poor attempts:  
'Vulcan' was spotted very close to the sun,  
And 'existed' for about five days,  
But now is relegated to the Star Trek World.

Another 'Vulcan', impossible to see,  
Being 180 degrees away from Earth,  
Behind the sun, was seen in the movie  
"Journey to the Far Side of the Sun".

Could an asteroid like Eris be a planet?  
Nope, not allowed, although all of the

Debris between Mars and Jupiter  
Could have come from an unstable planet.

Nice try, but it's not out there anymore,  
And any planets of other solar systems  
Don't count, nor does Planet Hollywood  
Or Daily Planet or any other restaurants.

Perhaps there's another planet way out,  
Beyond; that may be so, but, no matter,  
Though it may become the 10th planet, since  
I have found the newest 9th with no doubt.

The 9th planet does follow an orbit  
Close to Earth's, ever falling toward the sun—  
It is right under our nose: It's the moon!  
But, wait, you say, it is Earth's satellite.

Our moon is unique in the solar system—  
It's not captured by the Earth, but by the sun,  
It's orbit being everywhere concave to Sol.  
(Thanks to Issac Asimov for proving this.)

Never does our moon fall away from the sun,  
For it's attracted to it about twice as much  
As it is to the Earth, although the moon and  
The Earth do form a double planet system

That revolves about a common point that  
happens to be inside of the Earth.

## M o o n l i g h t S o n a t a

The music of the spring was in the breeze,  
A prelude borne by airy musicians  
Of the trees—the mating calls of the birds,  
That opened for the cosmic symphony.

The Music of the Spheres played in the park  
At night—flung down by our father, the Sky,  
Through the soft night to our Mother, the Earth,  
Then to us, their audience and progeny.

The planets joined in a concert to the  
Merrie Monthé of Maie, arrayed as follows:  
There was Venusia, the Bringer of Peace,  
Singing side by side with warring Marsius.

flitting about was the winged Mercuria,  
The speedy messenger who conducted  
The orchestra, melting all of us who  
Were touched by her wand of burning desire.

And mighty Zeus, was there, full to the brim  
With the jollity of the fat man's belly.  
By Jove, came Saturnus, so very gray  
With age—lumbering into the party.

Thence sat Urania, the magician, and  
The old sea captain, King Nep, the mystic,



But not Pluto; he was downsized, no more  
One of the harmonics—an underworld!

Jupiter's music was round and robust,  
While Saturn's boomed with the sounds of grandeur  
And the old venerable melodies;  
But, Mercury soon picked up the pace.

Next flowed the serene love songs of Venus,  
Followed inexorably by Martial marches.  
Now was the time for Urania's magic—  
She played musical jokes and surprises.

At last, their music came to mesh as one,  
And our wanderers of the night floated  
Away on the haunting mystical strains  
Of King Nep's tune, into the May flower moon.

Now we're touched, so touched by the starlight,  
Afraid that we'll ne'er be the same again.  
Can you sense the euphony of the spheres?  
Can you fathom the theory of everything?



## The Pursuit of Mercuria

For some years I have pursued that lovely  
Greco-Roman woman named Mercuria;  
I've yearned till I could no longer reason.  
Once, just the sight of her would have pleased me;

But now, at whatever cost and downfall,  
I must taste of her fiery passion.  
At whatever risk I plot her every move.  
When the time is right, I'll be seeing her;

It will be just us, while the world's asleep.  
The problem is that she's a fast woman  
And is quite difficult to even sight,  
Much less capture, entrance, embrace and kiss.

And I can only have her for awhile;  
Before dawn, if I linger with her song,  
We'd soon be consumed by a rising fire;  
After twilight, we'd be lost in darkness.

Yes, I have courted her many times,  
But she's so elusive, fleeting, and small.  
Once I waited for her just before nightfall.  
All was perfect—'twas the best time of all.

There was the calm of a windless sunset,  
Then the brief brooding of twilight's gloaming,

And the promise of a slow sultry night.  
Clouds arrived—and so I missed her again!

She strayed not far from her fiery lover.  
While I may have glimpsed her (I wasn't sure),  
She slid toward her master's gravity,  
Condemned to whirl about his light;

(However, I was quite determined;  
'Twas the thrill of the quest that kept me strong.)

I planned to surprise her just before dawn;  
I crept onto the frosty roof, near slipping,  
There waiting. Damn! Clouds were boiling along  
And blocking the view of her beauty rare.

Suddenly the clouds cleared, and she was mine—  
Just over the eastern horizon was  
The planet Mercury—Dear Mercuria.  
I stayed with her as long as possible,

Naked in the night, until, to blazes  
She went when the sun arose; however,  
Memories remain of those precious moments  
And now she belongs to me forever.

Venus is too easy, Mars always there,  
Jupiter ever-present, Saturn bright,  
Earth under my feet, Pluto underworlded;  
King Neptune, Queen Urania? Where are you?



### The Escape from SpaceTime

I had a night dream  
In which I dreamt that I woke up.  
Now I was once removed from spacetime,  
But, just to be sure, went back to 'sleep'  
To now dream within the dream.

So, in this double virtual reality,  
Spacetime no longer mattered  
And thus I had a whole 'nother life;  
Everything under the sun was new!



### The Conception of Natural Laws

You cannot fool Mother Nature; it is improper,  
for thou shalt not fiddle with Mother Nature.  
But Father Time outlives all who venture,  
So he can fool around with Mother Nature.

At some time during a long eternity,  
His paternity begat her maternity.  
They then gave birth to life's certainty.

The Transit of Venus Across the face of the Sun  
And the Unluckiest Man on the face of the Earth

Edmund Halley had suggested that if you measured  
The passage of Venus over the sun from selected  
Places on Earth, you could work out the distance to the sun  
By using triangulation and then go on to use that calibration  
To find the distances to all the other bodies of the solar system.

These transits come in pairs eight years apart  
And then there are none at all for a century dark.  
There were none in Halley's lifetime, but in 1761,  
Twenty years after Halley's death, the world was one.

Scientists set off for points all over the Earthly globe,  
Hundreds of them, but most remained in problem mode.  
Many were waylaid by war, shipwreck or sickness.  
Then, too, there was much damage to the instruments.

Jean Chappe spent many months traveling to Siberia  
By horse, sleigh, boat and coach, nursing his criteria  
Over every bump. At last he was near, but swollen rivers  
Blocked the way; locals blamed it on him looking at the heavens.

Guillaume Le Gentil set off from France a year ahead of time,  
But got delayed and was yet stuck at sea and brine,  
Impossibly trying to take measurements from a pitching ship.

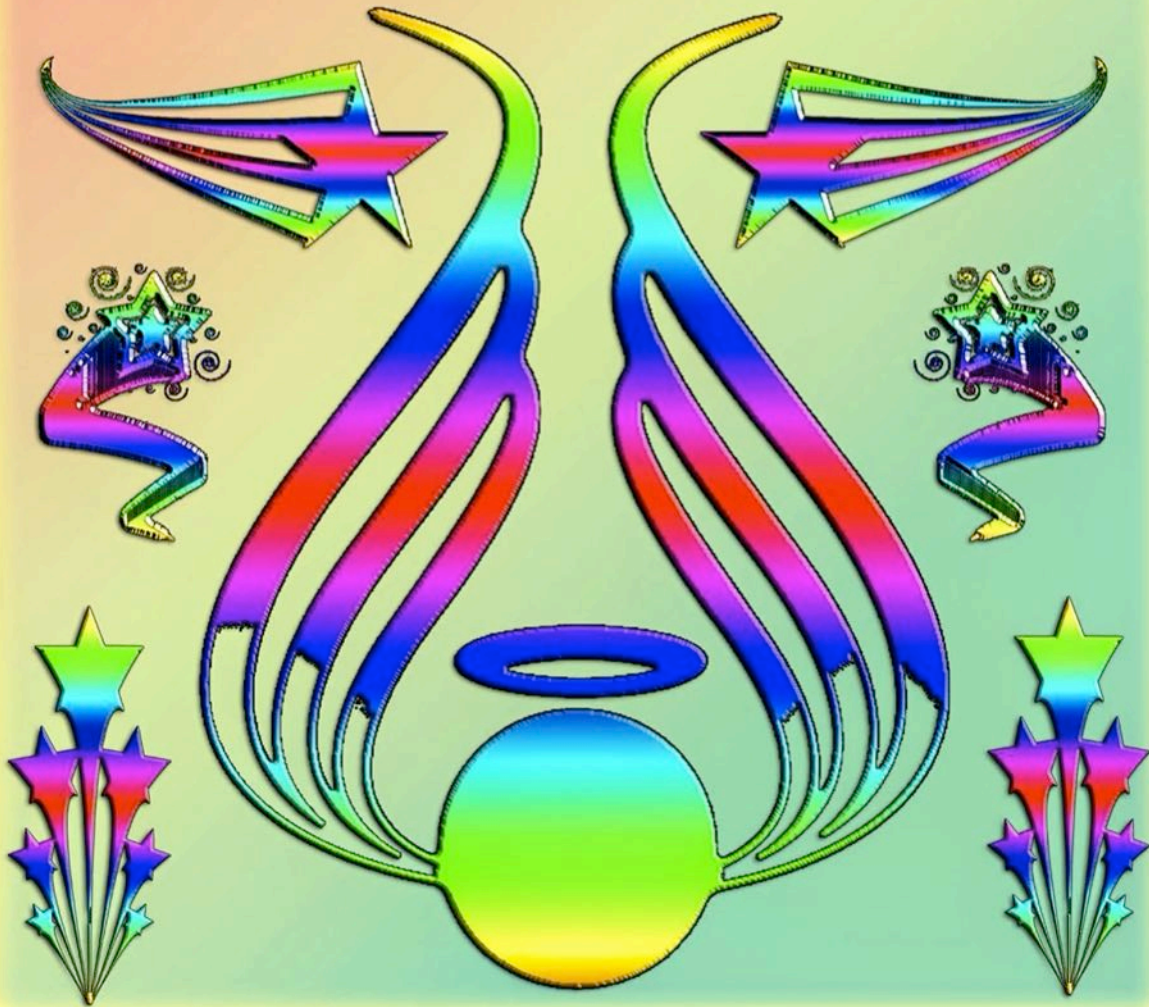
He continued on to India, now having eight years to prepare  
For the transit of 1769. He erected a viewing station there,  
Having everything ready on the fine day of June 4th;

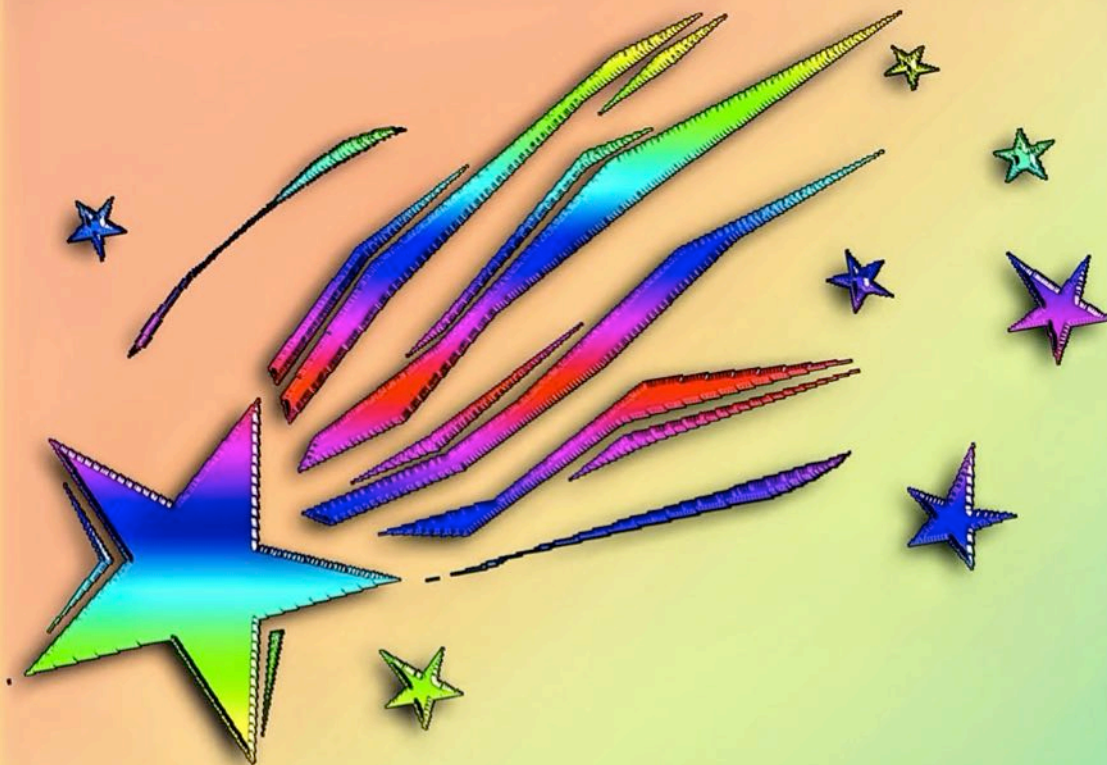
But just as Venus began its pass, a cloud slid forth  
Right in front of the sun and stayed there and spent  
Its time exactly for the the duration of the transit:  
Three hours, fourteen minutes, and seven seconds.

Enroute to a port to head for home, he contracted dysentery  
And was laid up for a year, but then finally left the territory  
On a ship that was later hit by a hurricane off  
Of the African coast and nearly wrecked and lost,

But he did make it home 12 years after setting off,  
Only to find that his relatives had long since sealed his fate  
By declaring him dead and then plundering his estate.

The few measurements from 1761 were of no benefit,  
But, luckily, in 1769, James Cook had watched the transit  
from a sunny hilltop in Tahiti, giving enough weight  
Of information now for Joseph Lalande to calculate  
The mean distance to the sun at about 150 million kilometers.





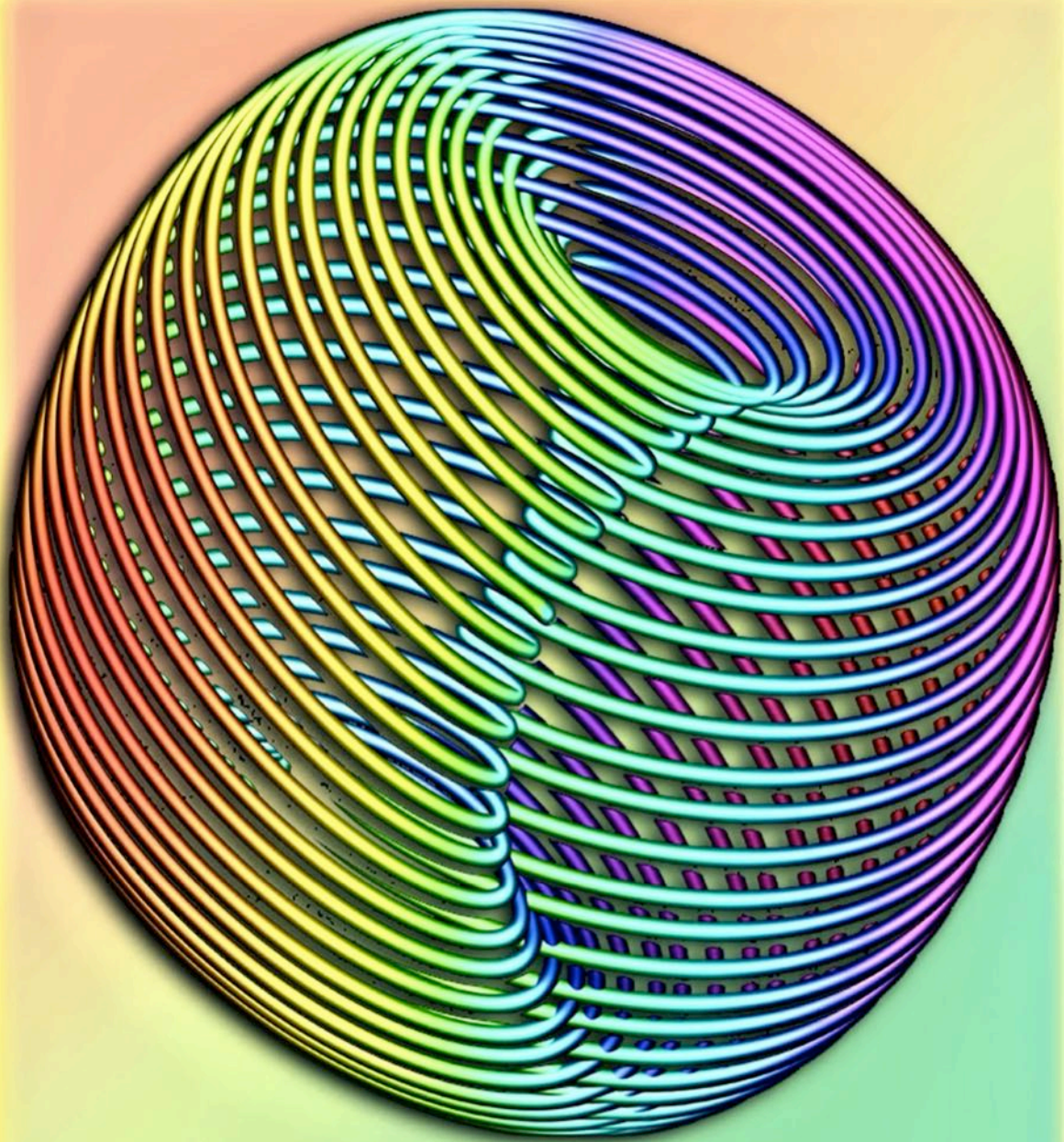
### The Asteroid That May Destroy Humanity

The air beneath it couldn't get out of the way of the rock,  
Rising in temperature ten times more than the sun is hot.  
Everything and everyone crinkled and crackled in the heat,  
Then a thousand cubic kilometers of earth blew from beneath.

This shock wave, radiating at about the speed of light,  
Would sweep just about everything else out of sight.  
From further away, one would see a blinding light  
And then the unimaginable grandeur of an apocalyptic sight:  
A rolling wall of silent darkness as black as midnight.

It would reach to the heavens, filling the entire field of view,  
Traveling far beyond the speed of sound toward me and you.  
A bewildering veil of turmoil would [ful]fill our vision  
During those few last minutes before we met oblivion.





### Star Voyagers

Some quarks we'll take aboard the final ark,  
On that penultimate day that all goes dark  
As the Red Giant envelopes Terra with fire,  
Then rebuild the Earth closer to our desire.

## Finding the Edge of the Universe!

At Princeton University, Robert Dicke and his team  
Had really been building up much scientific steam  
From pursuing George Gamow's good suggestion  
Of a deep space Cosmic Background Radiation.

Gamow wrote another paper suggesting some ways  
To use the Bell antenna, but no one read it in those days.

Unknowing of this paper and unbeknownst to Dicke,  
Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, but 30 miles not far,  
Were diligently trying to get rid of this very CBR!

At Bell Lab, their large communications antenna deployed  
Was plagued by some persistent background noise,  
A steady steamy hiss, unfocused and unrelenting,  
They ever attempting to squash it away so painstakingly.

For a year they'd tried to eliminate this nuisance noise,  
Through testing, rebuilding, and wiggling-dusting ploys,  
Even placing duct tape over each and every seam and rivet.  
They even wiped away a ton of bird shit from the dish,  
Scrub brushing it and sweeping it clean. But, no fish.

Little did they know they'd found the edge of the visible universe:  
The very first photons were at hand—the most ancient light,  
Although time and distance had changed it into microwaves.  
It was this interfering radiation they wished to swish away.

If the Empire State Building was the universe we know,  
They had reached within an inch of the sidewalk below.  
In desperation, they called Princeton about the noise;  
"We've been scooped!" Dicke sadly told all of his boys.

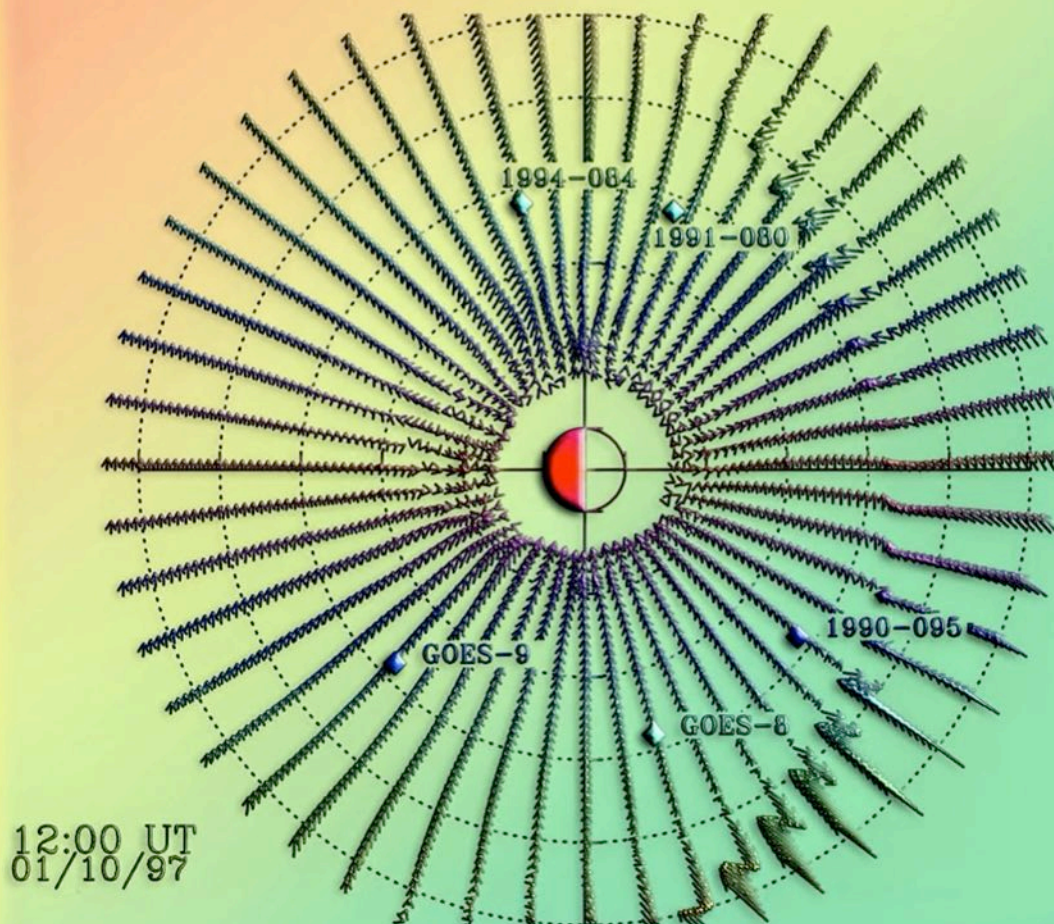
Penzias and Wilson received the 1978 Nobel Prize,  
Even though they'd not been looking, CBR-wise,  
And didn't even know what it was when they found it,

Nor had they ever described it in any scientific paper,  
Not even knowing the significance but from the newspaper.  
(Sadly, all that Dicke's team got was a bit of sympathy.)

note: they didn't really call it "bird shit",  
but a "white dielectric material".

See The Birth of the Universe At Home

You, too, can detect the ancient CBX;  
Just tune your TV to a blank channel;  
About 1% of the dancing static is the CBX.  
When there's nothing on, it's really everything!



## Star Voyage

Once I was young,  
(I said to the stars)  
for once I was you.



I love your flames  
Beckoning me  
Toward the fires of home,

But I have moved on,  
As all things must,  
To atoms and molecules,

And on into cells,  
for now I am them—  
A glorious complexity.



I travel the long road  
Thankful to all those  
Who came before.

One day I may go off  
Through interstellar space,  
Bringing forth these tales to tell.



## Other Worlds

Beyond our planets  
Whose names and order are indicated by  
“Martha visits every Monday  
and just stays until noon, period”  
(the ‘a’ of and is for the asteroid belt  
and the ‘period’—Pluto—is gone)  
Are the exoplanets  
Of other solar system,  
Discovered only since the 1990’s.

We really need  
a more specific spacecraft  
To get better looks,  
But some “hot Jupiters”  
Have been found  
Too close to their stars,  
And so they must have migrated there.

Maybe some kind  
Of Planetary assembly line...



## De Tour

I took a tour  
Of some exoplanets,  
Ranging from Heaven to Hell...

On Gliese 876D,

With an orbit  
Tighter than Mercury's,  
I waited an earth-year  
for the sun to come up,  
Since it rotates so slowly.

I noted its moon,  
Its atmosphere shredded  
By solar winds.

Sunrise released  
A fiery hell,

So I stepped ever back  
Into the twilight dawn  
Of a blood red sky.

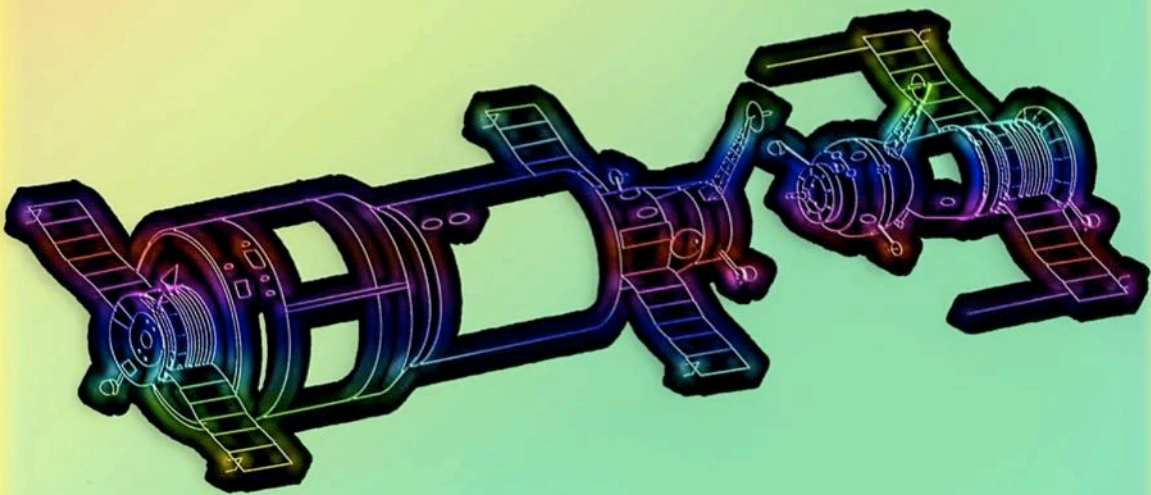


On Tres-4,  
There was an airy feeling,

It having the density  
Of balsa wood;  
And could literally  
float on water.

No one can explain  
Why it is so large.

It is perhaps but a toy  
In Someone's swimming pool.



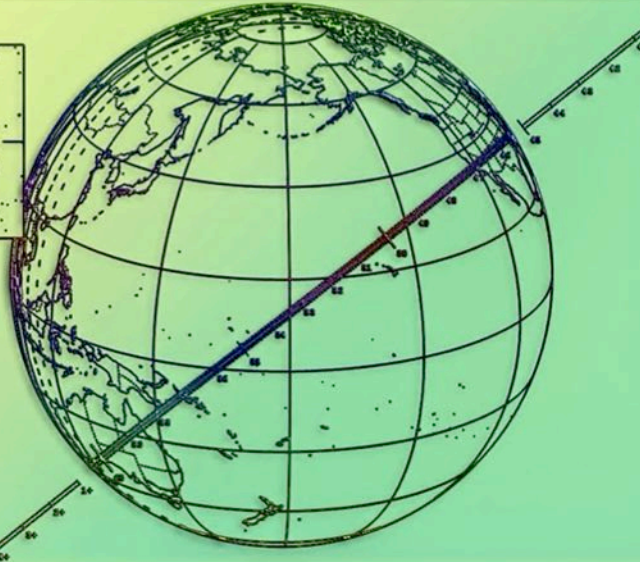
Tw hya b  
Is a hulking baby,

Only 10 million years old,  
Compared to the  
4.5 billions years  
Of Earth,

But it's ten times  
The mass of Jupiter.

Thank God for GPS.

1177 Gamaesia occults NYC 1184-00760-1 on 2009 Oct 11 from 16h 42a to 11h 1a UT  
RA = 21.1 Dec = 12.6 Eb = 14.6  
EA = 9 6 31.00  
Ecl = 18 of 14.28  
Duration of 2009 Oct 11.0  
Star Name = Gamaesia  
Star Type = Gamaesia  
Star Size = 100 mag  
Star Color = Gamaesia  
Star Distance = 48 U  
Star Position = 11.800° 1.800° in RA 77  
Longitude = 11.800° 1.800° in RA 77  
Longitude = 11.800° 1.800° in RA 77



Oct-11-09

55 Cancri  
Is ever bountiful,  
It's binary-star system  
Hosting five known planets.



It lies within  
The habitable zone,  
Conducive to life,

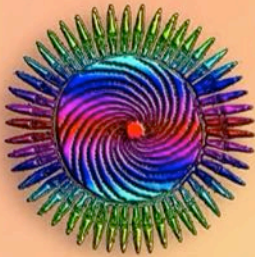


So, perhaps,  
I'll retire there.



## Saturn's Crystal Hexagon

On his cell phone, Graham texted a telegram,  
Which is really what texting is like, damn,  
With it's new codes and abbreviations  
(which is too long of a word for its definition),  
On out toward the sexagon on Saturn.



Graham needed more space  
From his wife-said place,  
So to the ice palace hex,  
He went to have good sex.

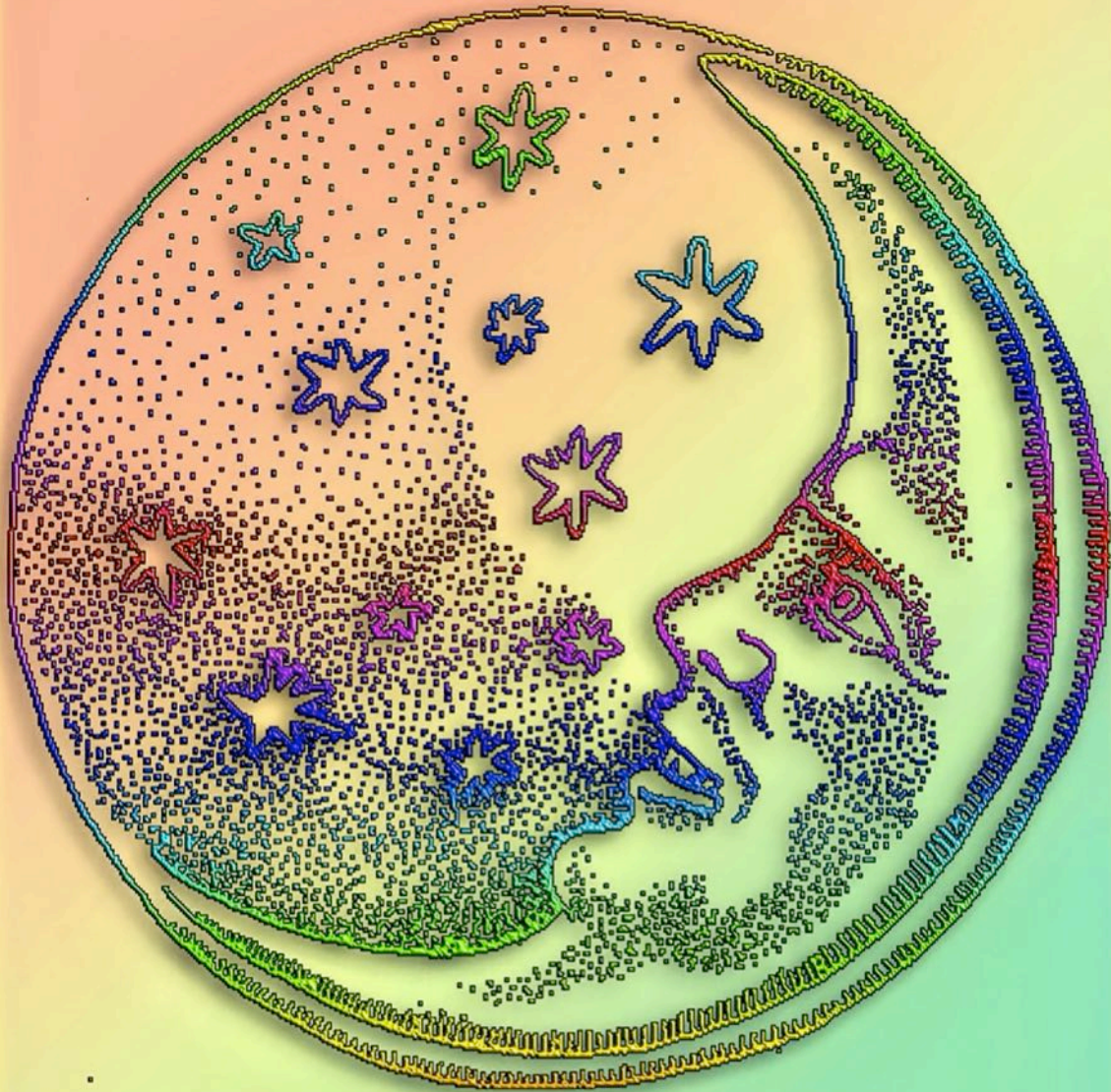


Back later came a mama-gram from the mams.  
Those lovely ladies there said for Graham the man  
To come back, bringing quickly some quarks  
For their quirks...

Came another tell-a-Graham from those mams,  
Saying, Master, we six slaves awaiting  
Have just delivered those many sequels  
Of that last happy Saturnalia's ringing bells.

Graham went off to attend to some family matters  
On Saturn concerning his sexagon,  
Although he still claims that his sex is a-gone.





### Holey Cheese

Holy cripes, we look to the holy skies: jeeese!  
The universe is but made of swiss cheese,  
As our the moon must have been, no doubt,  
Since it's crusty and hard from leaving it out.

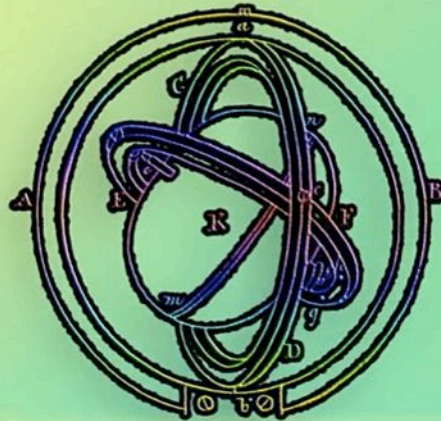
## Vacation Planets

Uranus is quite pleasant compared to Pluto.  
If you've ever had a dog, you know what I mean;  
However, the under-worlded canine has been  
Banished from the house of Astro—  
To reign as the under-world in the Underworld,  
For it's better to reign in Hell  
Than to be an unwelcome guest in the heavens.

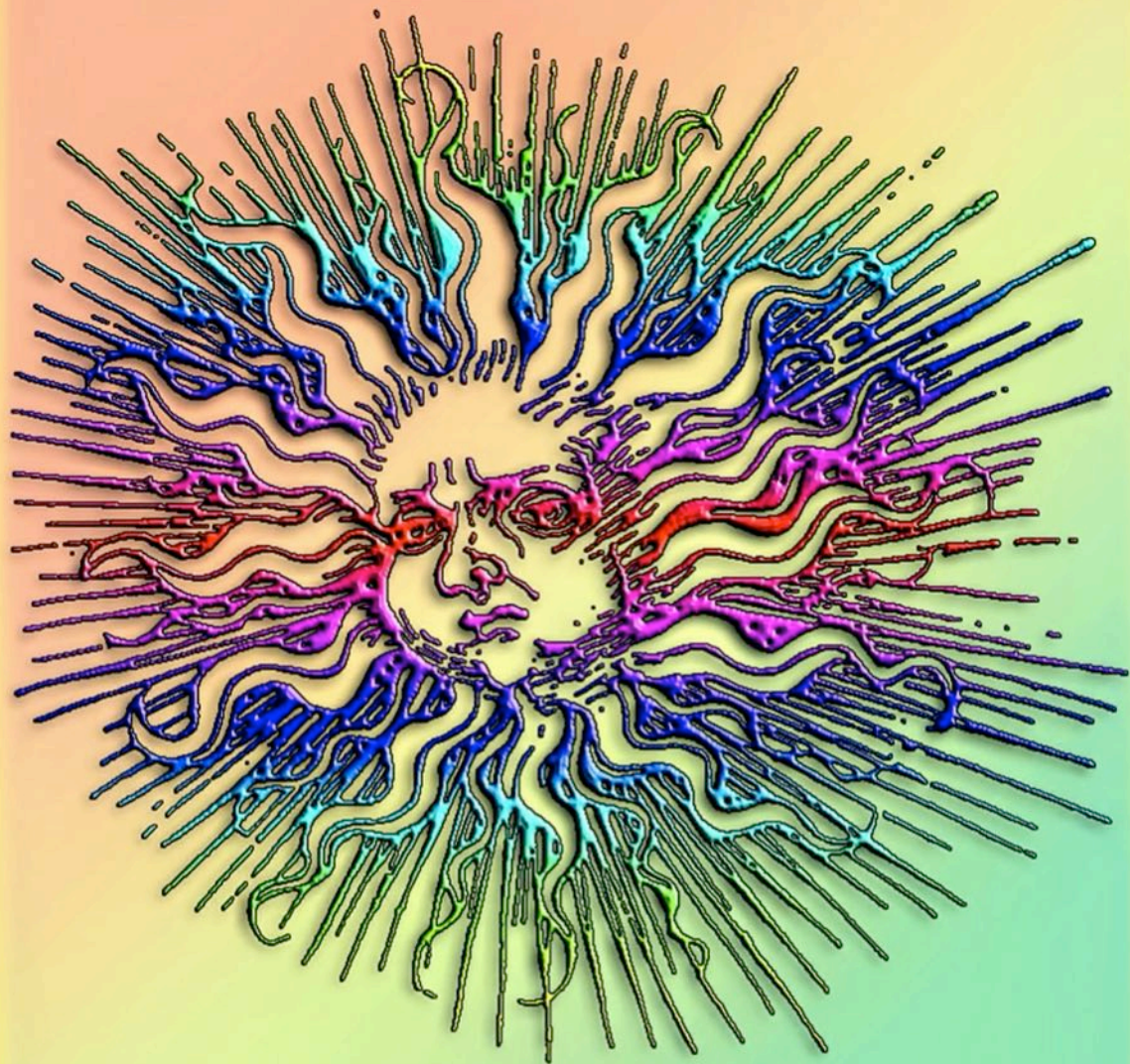
Once, I was down on Venus  
And the sulphurous emanations  
Were so repulsive that any gases from Uranus  
Would have been to me as a breath of fresh air.

The gas giant planets' breadth  
And width is staggering,  
And their mooning around is getting out of hand.

That leaves Mars as the only other good place—  
Since Klingons have now appeared  
On the rings around Uranus.



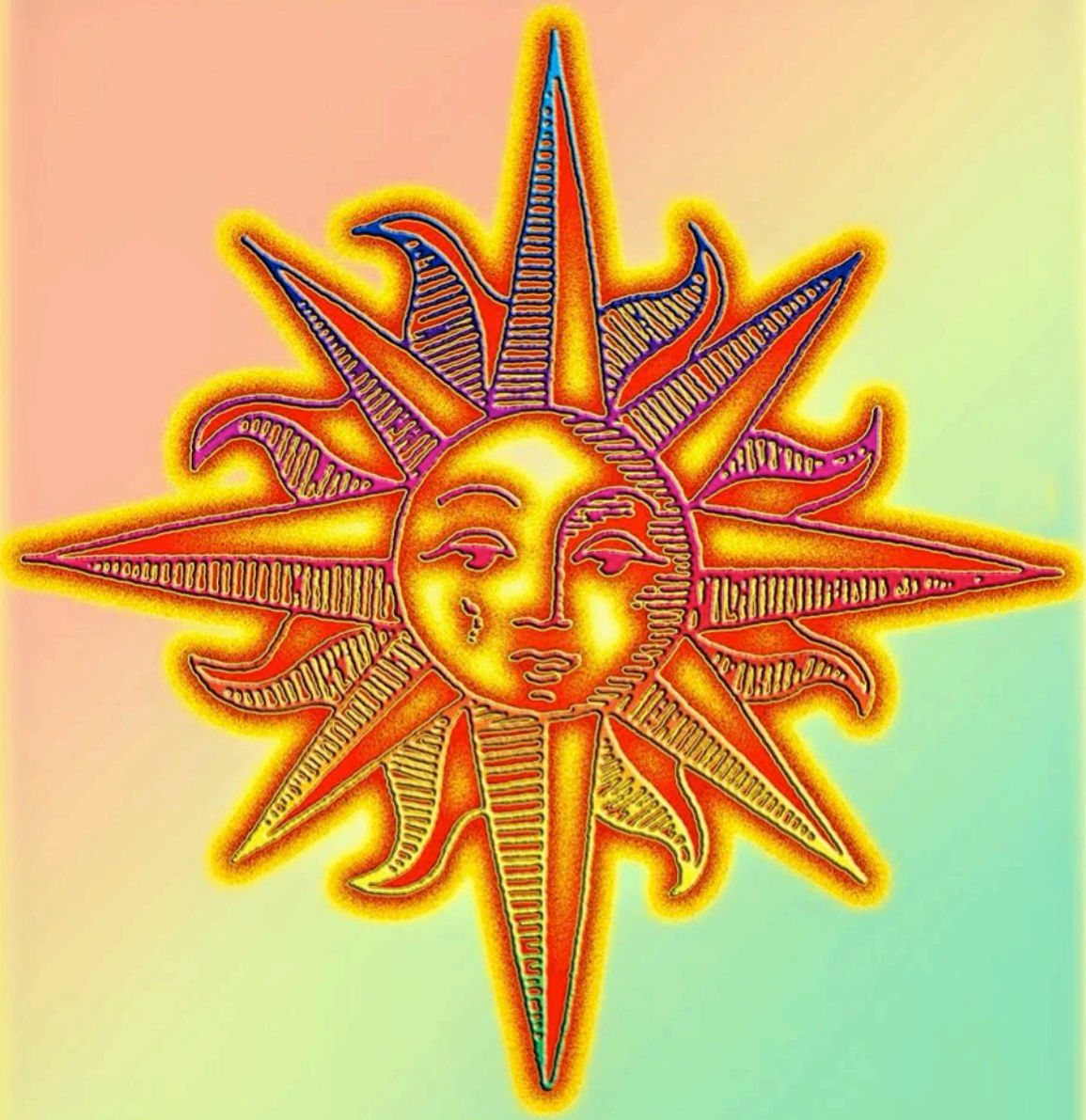




## Solar Research

Some researchers landed on the sun and didn't get burned,  
Although it wasn't because the anti-light suit they learned,  
And it wasn't through mind control that dimmed the light—  
It was because they went at night!





Sol

Of stars, those lights of dark eternity,  
Is one that now shines bright for you and me;  
Photons race the sky across, shedding light,  
Enlivening, illuminating humanity.

## An Escalating One Way Trip From a fluke To Oblivion?

The majority of the energy of the universe is dark today,  
Although everything else passes through it in every way.  
It's everywhere, having a component that repels its own state,  
Which causes the expansion of the universe to much accelerate.



### Dark Matters: The Escalation

We're on a one way trip from the quantum fluke,  
That maximal disorder within old Planck's nook—  
Heading toward the oblivion of sparse expansion,  
All that we ever loved and knew going to extinction.

## The Eternal Return

Behind the Veil, being that which ev'r thrives,  
The Eternal Cycle has ever been alive.

Some time it needed to learn Everything for,  
And now well knows how these bubbles to pour,  
Of existence in this meant universe,  
That writes your poem and mine, every verse.

So thus thou lives on yester's credit line,  
In nowhere's midst—now in this life of thine,  
As of its bowl our cup of brew was mixed  
Into this state of being that's called "mine".

Yet worry you that this Cosmos is the last,  
That the likes of us will become the past,  
Space wondering whither whence we went  
After the last of us her life has spent...

The Eternal Cycle has thus formed  
Trillions of baubles like ours, and will form,  
Forevermore—the comings and passings  
Of which it ever emits to immerse  
The universal bubbles blown and burst.

So fear not lest a debit close your  
Account and mine, knowing the like no more;  
The Eternal Cycle from its pot has pour'd  
Zillions of bubbles like ours, and will pour.  
When You and I behind the cloak are past,  
But the long while the next universe shall last,  
Which of our approach and departure knows  
As might the sea's self heed a pebble-cast.

## W h a t N o M a n H a d T h o u g h t B e f o r e

Alan Guth had never done anything much before,  
But soon attended Dicke's Big Bang lecture tour,  
And so had decided to study the birth of the universe.  
And so just like that he developed inflation theory first.

The "Big Bang" formed 98 percent of matter spent,  
But whence the rest of all the higher elements?  
What flaming forge fired carbon, iron and more?  
Fred Hoyle was a nut, much unloved, and a big bore.

Working with others who often avoided him,  
Hoyle came up with imploding stars, a whim  
That that allowed supernovae to generate  
The heavier elements at the rate of his steady state.

This process was known as nucleosynthesis,  
Causing a 100 million degree heat and mist  
That sprayed new elements into gaseous clouds of stardust  
That could eventually coalesce into solar systems, and us.

99.9% of this mass made our sun, the rest leftover dirt,  
Ever colliding, two grains being the conception of Earth,  
For in every encounter there was always a winning lump  
Of these endless and random bumping growing clumps.

(Fowler, not Hoyle, obtained the precious Nobel prize;  
Hoyle had been overlooked, but to no one's surprise.)



# Meteor Memoir



Obliterated by a war nuclear,  
The Earth exploded in blazes solar!  
Said a child in a galaxy afar,  
“Oh, look! Look at the pretty shooting star!”

**ON THE ORIGIN,  
WHO DESIRED THAT ON ITS TOMB  
SHOULD BE INSCRIBED--**

**'Here lieth One whose name was writ on water.'**

**The 'false' and melted vacuum was liquid energy—  
Unstructured, unordered, and going nowhere,  
But, then, inexplicably, it 'fell',  
As from a kind of 'shelf'...**

**...Whirling, twirling and swirling inward  
Until there was no more inward left...**

**And thus it crystallized, frozen,  
Into our structured 'true' vacuum,**

**It 'thought' that its future could never be,  
That its quality was but written  
On the water and the wind  
With a feathery quill  
Whose ink was the smoke and fog  
Of a shimmering dream.**

**Then it died... like the Phoenix.**

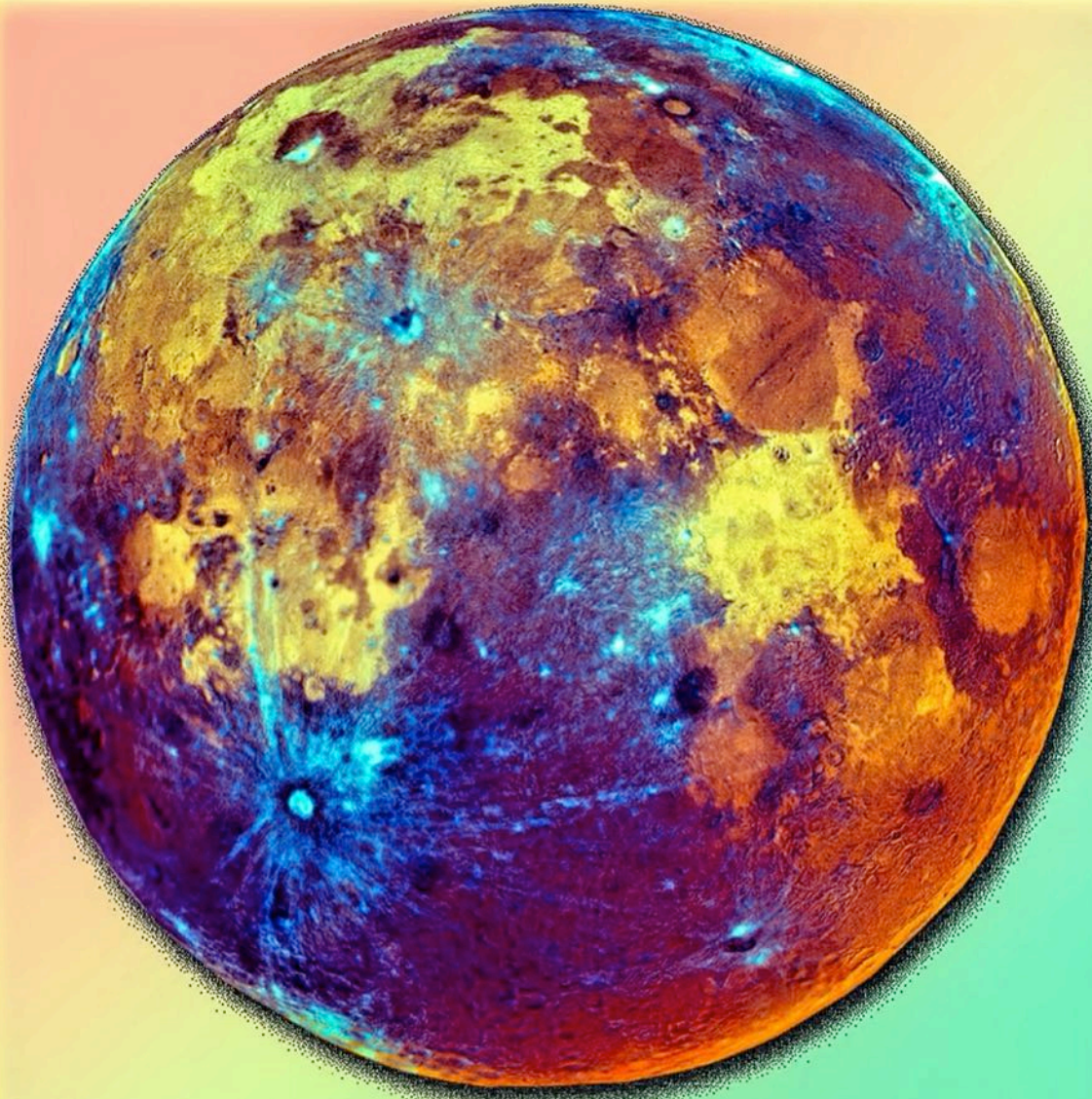
**Ere the breath that could erase it blew,  
Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,  
Death, the immortalizing winter, flew  
Athwart the flowing stream—  
And Time's printless torrent grew  
A scroll of crystal,  
Blazoning the name  
Of 'The Universe'!**



The  
Seasons  
of the  
Moon







## Moon Children

The Earth would wobble like a dying top very soon,  
Without the steadying influence of our lovely moon;  
But, it is slipping from our grasp an inch and a half a year.  
Well, the end is not so near, but we'll need a way out of here.

The clear skies uncovered a hidden wonder—  
The pale Unicorn full moon just yonder  
That marked another month gone by—  
There, plain as day, in the twilight sky.

Memories danced again to yet another time,  
As All-Man's-Knack made reason and rhyme.

Thus, the day of sunshine and moonglow.  
Yes, the Lion-sun rules the toiling day,  
But the Unicorn-moon, shining bright,  
Brings wisdom and calm in the night.

At the magic times of dawn and twilight,  
When the lion and unicorn battle together  
For the heavens, only beauty and goodness  
Can ensure the victory of wisdom.

After twilight had gone, the October moon  
Of the Harvest feast rose up in the east,  
Looking much larger than it really was.

She didn't feel so alone as she had thought,  
With that man-in-the-moon she sought,  
Looking over her shoulder.

She felt somehow protected by that lonely sky face.  
All was so bright that the only darkness  
About her was her shadow.

She entertained the thought that there  
Were but three at the camp tonight:  
Herself, the moon, and her shadow—  
A thought that everyone someday  
Entertains on the most moonlit of nights.

The moon, which often seemed cold-hearted,  
Was warm tonight. Wherever he was that night,  
She knew that he would see it too. She drank the  
Last wine of the Grail, now a part of the legend.

Some two centuries after the time of Alexis,  
Li Po, of China, would write,  
“I take a bottle of wine and I go drink it  
Among the flowers. We are always three—  
Counting my shadow and my friend  
The shimmering moon...

Happily, the moon knows nothing of drinking,  
And my shadow is never thirsty.  
When I sing, the moon listens to me in silence.  
When I dance, my shadow dances too.  
After all festivities the guests must depart;  
This sadness I do not know.  
For when I go home, the moon goes with me  
And my shadow follows me.”

That night he observed the harvest moon  
In the sky, and in it saw a hybrid face

Containing the features of Arthur, old Arthur.  
It was said that when Arthur died,  
Merlyn rearranged the mountains of the moon  
To resemble Arthur's face—not as he now appeared,  
But as how he might have appeared  
Had he ever gotten old.

He arrived; they embraced and kissed,  
And then they raised their glasses to the sky.  
During the toast, a flock of ducks flew high,  
Barely visible except when they crossed the moon.

"A toast." Percevale declared,  
As the jewels of Orion's belt twinkled,  
And as the starlight passed through their glasses;  
Perhaps those three stars were the twinkling  
Of old Merlyn's three eyes, those which could see  
The present, past, and future in only one glimpse.

"May we all toast again in three places  
Of the Universe," said Percevale:  
"Here, where we stand now,  
Then in the old hall at Camelot,  
And, finally, in Heaven."

...

I have never seen a bluer sky  
Than that of October's on high.  
Perhaps it's due to the cool dry air.  
The vision is enhanced by the foreground  
Of the colorful orange tree leaves.



Following the harvest, the moon that yet  
Shone was a strange sight in its late morn-set,  
A large chunk was missing from its battered orb.

There was the sun well risen in the east  
Seeming to balance this moon of the west.

They made our way through a lonely upland  
Wild and still, where October's last wind  
Whispered at will for the souls of the dead.

Towards evening on first November's day,  
The first quarter moon rose later this day,  
Sitting atop the evening star to pray,  
And then rose later and later each day,  
Drawing away from Venus, going away,  
Thereby adding light in its own way.

This is the last true blue  
That we shall see for some time;  
It's only fitting that it be the best of times,  
The bluest of times.

No leaves, no warmth, no sky,  
No snow—November.

November is a most difficult time.  
The glory of the summer and of the leaves is gone;  
It seems like it has been gone for years.  
The spirit of the holiday season is not yet at hand.



The grey and rainy skies are a stark contrast  
To the dry blue skies of October.  
There is no snow yet for winter sports  
And the land remains barren;  
The land is dead, and the very year itself  
Continues to die in the night.

The day is so short that  
When one gets home for dinner  
It already seems time for bed.  
Time for hibernation perhaps.

To these feelings we add the specter  
Of a long, drawn-out winter.  
Now we even long for February.

Come December, we'll await, when auroras  
Will set fire to the polar heavens  
To give some color to our lives  
During the festival of the Yule.

'Second' summer was brief this year  
And some weeks passed without a tear.  
Chill winds now hastened our approach  
To the nearest inn, as we beheld, by coach,  
The rising omen of winter in the late night sky:

"Orion, King of the bejeweled winter sky,  
Backbone of our frozen nights," said I,



“Wield your sword ever above our headen bow,  
But please, for our knightly sake, never below!”

There it was, smack in the road a head—  
A huge yellow beast rising dead ahead,  
It growing larger as we the seconds read!

Now right in front of our eyes did it lie!  
It was, of course, the moon not yet high.  
“The November frost moon is even more  
Impressive than that of the harvest lore,  
For it is so colorful and intimidating.”

It rose straight into a thunderhead’s din  
As an old lady opened the door of the inn.  
“Tit for tat,” said she, as she farted at the thunder.

The first of December was clear, with rime,  
And Venus could be seen in the daytime—  
It seemed to be directly in the swoon  
Of the early setting first quarter moon,  
And was even brighter than that moon.

Sure enough, the time came when that moon  
Gave birth to Venus after its eclipse, so soon,  
And they both together set from the skies,  
A wonder of wonders to my open eyes.

When the full and gleaming December moon  
Shone On the snow,

It made for the season's brightest night,  
Brighter than the most dismal day.  
No one saw this Cold, Yule moon, however, but one  
Sir Arthur, once King,  
And may he ever watch over us as we sleep.  
This was their prayer that night.

It was but one of the few full moons missed  
By Percevale's keen eye, but he dreamt of it,  
As did many others that night when the moon's tides  
Tossed them about on the swells  
Of resurrected memories from forgotten seas.

They woke up suddenly with a start.  
Even before they were fully alert  
They realized that something had changed.  
They couldn't quite name it, but something...

It was very quiet outside, and this silence  
Was somehow different, for noises were muffled.  
The daylight coming in the window was brighter,  
Barer than yesterday's.

Then they realized that the season's  
first big snow had fallen during the night.  
The air, the trees, and the inn were hushed  
In the snow. So, now it was winter.

Their memories swelled for a while.  
To the changes in the weather, in the seasons,



They thought, we are sensitive,  
Despite our civilized attempts  
To remove ourselves from its raw influence.

We never truly sleep. We are animals yet.  
The first snowfall you won't hear, or often see,  
But its advent will bring you from the deepest sleep.

December's foggy freeze descended upon the inn  
And the cold air seemed to crinkle about the body.

Guinevere had seen many such winters,  
Some from cold and lonely towers,  
But winter's embrace always seems to surprise us.

This day, many a gravedigger cursed his task  
As he shoveled at the snowy hardened ground  
In an attempt to bury the Vikings killed last night.  
The clanking could be heard throughout the day,  
And the bodies were as stiff as the ground  
That yawned to receive them.

Christmas came and went at the inn,  
Hardly making a dent in the festive atmosphere;  
however, the stone walls and withered gates  
Of the inn warmed with the festival of the Yule,  
The bakers' cakes, the rituals of the Druids,  
And the cutting of the sacred mistletoe  
from the chosen oak.

Lazy winter days turned into weeks.  
Percevale began to daydream of the Tropics:  
“The moon is growing larger, towards first quarter.  
What a strange sight is the tropical moon—  
It fills up with light from the bottom,  
Not from the side—but that’s Equatoria!

Proud Orion the hunter and his three hunting dogs  
Stride high, right down the center of the sky,  
In Equatoria, for that is where you will find  
The celestial equator there—directly above  
The earth’s equator, not near the horizon.

Alliances of the north are broken now, here,  
Neither north nor south of the moon’s path.  
‘I am the only white face, all others are brown.  
And my name is Taliesin, the King’s poet.  
You dream of me, Percevale, for I’ll soon return.’”

On January 4, the earth was at perihelion,  
Its closest point to the sun. It was a new year.  
The full Wolf moon rode high in the sky  
That night to guide all on their way.

When the dead Orion is seen no more  
And the Archer of the sky pursues  
The Scorpion to his death to avenge  
The poisoning of that great hunter,  
Then it shall be the spring of wonder;

That will be the time of the greatest glory—  
Once Mars the warrior catches the two giants.  
This will carry us well through the time  
When Orion again rises once again  
To pursue the seven sisters,  
The seven daughters of Atlas.

“Perhaps it is the blessings of the gods  
That we see up above,” she offered.  
“How nice of them to provide dotted pictures  
For us in the form of the sky’s constellations.  
How clearly they can be seen now  
As the new crescent moon sets.  
There is the old moon in its arms,  
Like our old life as it rests  
In the arms of our new one.”

Delicate stars drifted to ground, as snowflakes,  
And the day was filled with snow-how wakes  
As the morning wind stirred up the stardust,  
Old and new. Hibernation soon overtook all  
As the full dead-winter Snow moon  
Brightened the frozen night into noon.

Meanwhile, the Big Dipper had nigh  
Swing round in the winter sky,  
Looking like a gigantic question mark.  
Later, showers of ice needles steadily fell,  
Until the sky cleared, near morning’s bell.



Then we shone in the Venus-light of morn,  
following that rising morning star just born  
On through the oncoming dawn  
And into the daylight, for it was shining  
Brightly in the night,  
And casting our shadows on the snow.

“What is on the dark side of the moon?”  
“We don’t know, Percevale;  
Mankind is still attached to the earth.  
While there are some now who fly balloons  
Of hot air, they can hardly go high enough  
To investigate the mysteries  
Of the moon’s dark side.”

“Indeed we all have dark sides.  
I have learned to live with mine.”

The great astronomers of the Land  
had finally reached the King’s court,  
With only two days to spare.

“My King,” they cried in unison  
And out of tune at that,  
“In two days hence all of the planets  
Will be in as straight of a line from Earth  
As is ever possible! If this were not enough,  
The full Worm moon rises as well that day!  
This alignment dooms us all.”



Surprisingly, on Doomsday Eve,  
The kingdom did not erupt into madness.  
There were no robberies,  
for what good would wealth be after Doomsday?  
There were no murders,  
for who would wish to blacken their record  
So close to the Judgment Day?  
There wouldn't be time enough to repent!

No, it was only the best of times.  
People warmly thanked their friends and enemies  
for the spirit that they had shown,  
Explaining that they were always too busy  
To do this before. All was tranquil.

"See there, Percevale," said Taliesin,  
"See the mist about the planets and the moon,  
Especially near the Sea of Vapors?  
The opiate rim vapors of all the great planets  
have calmed the people.

These lofty visions of the great unknown  
have induced the people to forget their day-to-day  
Minor grudges and realize the goodness of life—  
To realize, almost too late, what could have been.

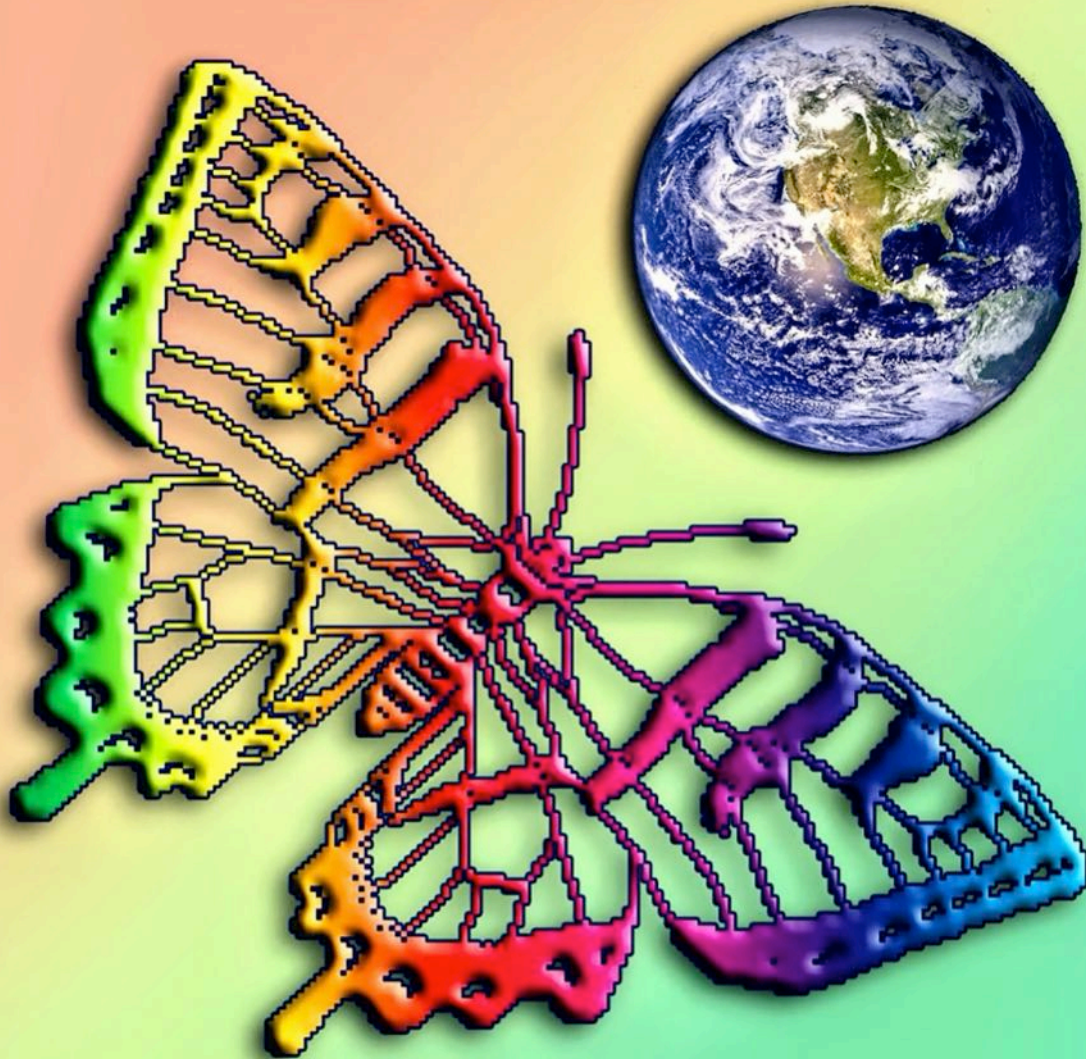
No Doomsday is this;  
It is the first day of our new world!"

*The stars are eternity's running-lights  
They shine, even through the fathomless night!*



*From what bright star came the gleam in your eyes?  
To what distant sun returns your smiles light?*

*Among the lights that dance in the sky,  
An oasis waits for you and I,*



*A world where flowers bloom & fountains spray;  
A paradise called Earth to glorify.*

{Goodbye Moon, Hello West Wind}

Yes, they were tired, unlike our Lion escort,  
As they finished a March of thirty-one days.  
There they all stood, like fools, looking at the moon.

The moon just sat there and waited  
For someone to speak. No one did.  
Finally the jester said, "It's not so funny—  
The weather we're having, I mean."

"Yes, the days seem to be getting longer,"  
Said the moon. "Soon I and my friends  
Of the night sky will be all but obliterated  
By the long days and the lingering twilight  
Of the British summer. I trust that you  
Will not forget your old pals like me  
Who carried you through the winter!  
We trod the snow with you—remember?  
I was your shadow; my footprints followed yours."

"I will never forget you, old man," said Taliesin.  
"We will stand by your coppery side  
Even in the month of June as you disappear  
During the short mystic night,  
The night of the broken moon—  
When you, our pale-faced King of the night,  
Are disrobed of all your borrowed light  
By an eclipse.

But, now you must surely realize  
That the balance tips  
Between the day and the night;  
We have the equinox and the spring to consider!  
Now men's hearts must turn away,  
For a time, from the fathomless sky  
To the outdoor events  
That do unfold all around us.  
How we love to be taken ill  
With the fever of the Spring.  
Like the April fools that we are,  
We fall for it every time.

Inebriated are we all with  
That first breath of spring.  
Not just a breath, mind you,  
But the beloved zephyr,  
That lukish wind from the west,  
Never a wicked wind, but a lovely soft wind  
That caresses one's body from head to toe  
As long as you will allow it."

"Now I remember the spring," related Guinevere.

"Now, this morning, as we wash our faces  
In the dew, I remember! And now I know,  
And how do I know—that life is good,  
Especially good, when the west wind  
Softly evaporates the morning dew  
From our bright faces."

“Indeed,” replied Percevale,  
“I am always amazed, year in and year out,  
When, in spring, nature reinvents the world.”

The moon never could get used to being ignored  
In the early spring when men’s eyes turned  
Ever downward to the up and coming crocus.

So, the moon burst forth with many tales.  
First, the moon sliced through the clouds  
And cut them to shreds.  
Next, the clouds in the other half of the sky  
Went black, even with the sun behind them  
And the morning bells began to chime.

And on a new April day,  
Snow fell from the midst of the moon—  
flakes like fine willow flowers,  
Like shreds of silk torn from the clouds.

The old moon man blew it this way and that  
Until one could hardly see from here to there.

“O moon,” said Percevale,  
“How little faith you have in us!  
Did you really think that we could forget you?”

“Taliesin, my poet”, asked Percevale.  
“What words do you have for us

On such a snowy April day?"

"Well, my King, I say to you that April  
has long been classified as portion of winter,  
Not of spring, and that an April blizzard  
Is not unexpected; furthermore, the winter,  
Like death, seizes on men whether prepared or not;  
But that May, like the virgin of Virgo,  
Will quickly work her spring charm  
Into the embrace of winter's icy arms  
Such that all shall be warm and flowery for us.

Even now the wing'd musicians do sing  
To entertain the bashful spring.  
Now, sit down and hear the snow melting  
Under Nature's eye in the sky.

Put your drink in the shade  
So it will stay cold,  
For the bright light melts the cold ice.  
And listen:  
The rivulets run down to the shore;  
The trickling is heard by us  
As we are laid sunning in the snow.  
Great white beasts lumber through the sky  
As clouds and then disappear at twilight.

OK, moon—  
You full and budding Pink moon,  
I have a question for you.

With Percevale and Galan no longer knights,  
But kings, who will be the last knight now?  
Who is the last knight of them all?"

Replied the moon, "thanks for the easy question.  
Don't you remember? Why—I wear his face!  
It is Sir Arthur, once king, of course,  
He is the last knight, watching over you  
From my visage as you can but smell  
The fresh-turned-earth-mold!  
Now chose your mate,  
The joyful spring to celebrate.

...  
The Viking ships sailed underneath the cover  
Of the clouds which hid the full Strawberry moon.  
Soon the first of many river villages began to fall.  
The first village took the brunt of the attack,  
And the rest were empty by the time  
That the Norse men reached them.  
An ugly infection was quickly spreading  
Through the main artery of Britain.

Alexis eased the old ship past the Vikings  
Sleeping on the shore, her navigation aided  
By the full moon, now showing,  
And by Percevale's river knowledge.  
"They don't see us yet, Percevale."

The monthly tide wave had already entered  
The back part of the river near the harbor





Where the young knights dined  
At The Port of Missing Men,  
Where the warning bells rang and the diners  
Lifted their feet, as the high deck was washed  
By the splashes of the river-bore.

Of course, it would be much worse  
Farther down the river—  
It was a wall of water growing higher and higher  
As the river channel narrowed in the Severn.

The Viking ships in the rear of the fleet—  
The older, weaker ships—were the first to fall  
As the river-tide bore them down—  
The ships were smashed against the rocks  
In this very narrow portion of the Severn  
Where the tide was at its highest.

Thoralf's Viking flagship tried to beat the wave  
By veering hard to starboard to gain the safety  
Of a river island, but this was a bad move—  
As the mighty warship was hit broadside  
And was quickly swamped.

Percevale's ship had no time to make the shore,  
But grounded itself on the river island  
As they were carried inland by the huge tidal wave.

Most the armor-heavy Vikings were drowned  
Or swept away, but, towards evening

An exhausted Viking Chief  
Began to regain his strength on the island beach  
Not far from Percevale and his party.

The tide-wave bore its way past  
The Severn Country Inn where Taliesin  
Watched and heard the death screams in his mind  
While he gazed over the fields of purple heather  
Waving in the heartland,  
A land now safe for the time being.

It was a steamy metal night on the river island—  
Not a breeze was to be felt.  
Sweat dripped on one's cheeks  
Even as one lay still,  
Wrung out by the day's events.

Night fell, and was brightened  
By the perpetual twilight that lasted all night  
This time of year in Britain and by the bright moon  
Which was only a day past full.

“Goodnight, moon,” said Percevale.

“Goodnight, Percevale,” answered the Viking Chief,  
Thoralf, from out of the shadows,  
His axe of hot metal already in hand  
And gleaming in the moonlight.

“Live and be free,” said Percevale, “or die.”

Thoralf thought but for a second  
And then threw the axe directly at Percevale,  
    End over end;  
    It glanced off Percevale's sword  
    As he knocked it to the ground.  
Both men just stood and stared at each other.  
Percevale did not yet release his hidden darts.

The Viking Chief gloated,  
"One sword is no match for two Viking axes,  
    But tell me first, before you die,  
    Just what it was that was a match  
    For my fleet today. I must know  
    Before I split your head in two."

Percevale replied calmly,  
"Your fleet has been defeated by none other  
    Than your own abandonment of nature.  
Your forgot about the moon because it was cloudy  
And since the nights are short this time of year.  
    There is your conqueror, Viking Chief;  
There, in the sky just over your left shoulder—  
    It hangs there, near Jupiter."

Thoralf chanced a glance at the moon,  
Yet, in that instant Percevale retrieved his sword,  
And spoke, "Each month the full moon and the sun  
Conspire to raise a forty foot tide on the Severn."

The Viking Chief just walked away,  
Moonstruck perhaps.  
Percevale did not attack him,  
But wondered: Perhaps there comes a time  
In an evil man's life when he wonders  
What he has become  
And of the terrible deeds that he has done."

Well, these were the tides of life and death  
That swept through men's hearts  
From time to time—they could take you  
To new highs or lows,  
And now and then you stayed there,  
And sometimes you fell back.

It was well after midnight now,  
And Leo had already dove into the west.  
Mars was passing Saturn, and Antares,  
The heart of the Scorpion,  
Was already rising in the southwest.



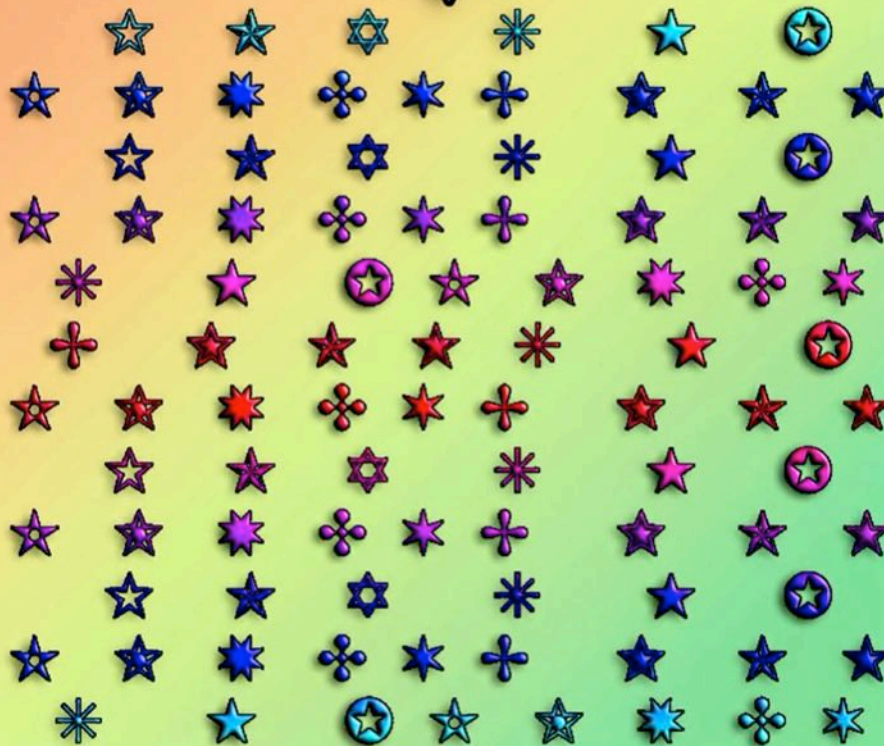


### Heaven found

Purgatory's on Venus, where sulphurs rain.  
Hell's found in the sun's heart, oh, hot burning pain!  
Of Heaven's site, no one has any idea—  
for it's the world's best kept secret: Earth's its name!



*Look at the stars in the depths of the night;  
Hold the flames in your mind, keeping them bright.*



*Their power flows, energizing you from  
The Eternal Charger—you see the light!*

{The King of Time and Motion}

They soon arrived at the sacred Ring of Stones  
That signalled the approach to Salisbury Plain.

Here they rested, just beyond its perimeter,  
For the horses would not go near this magic place.

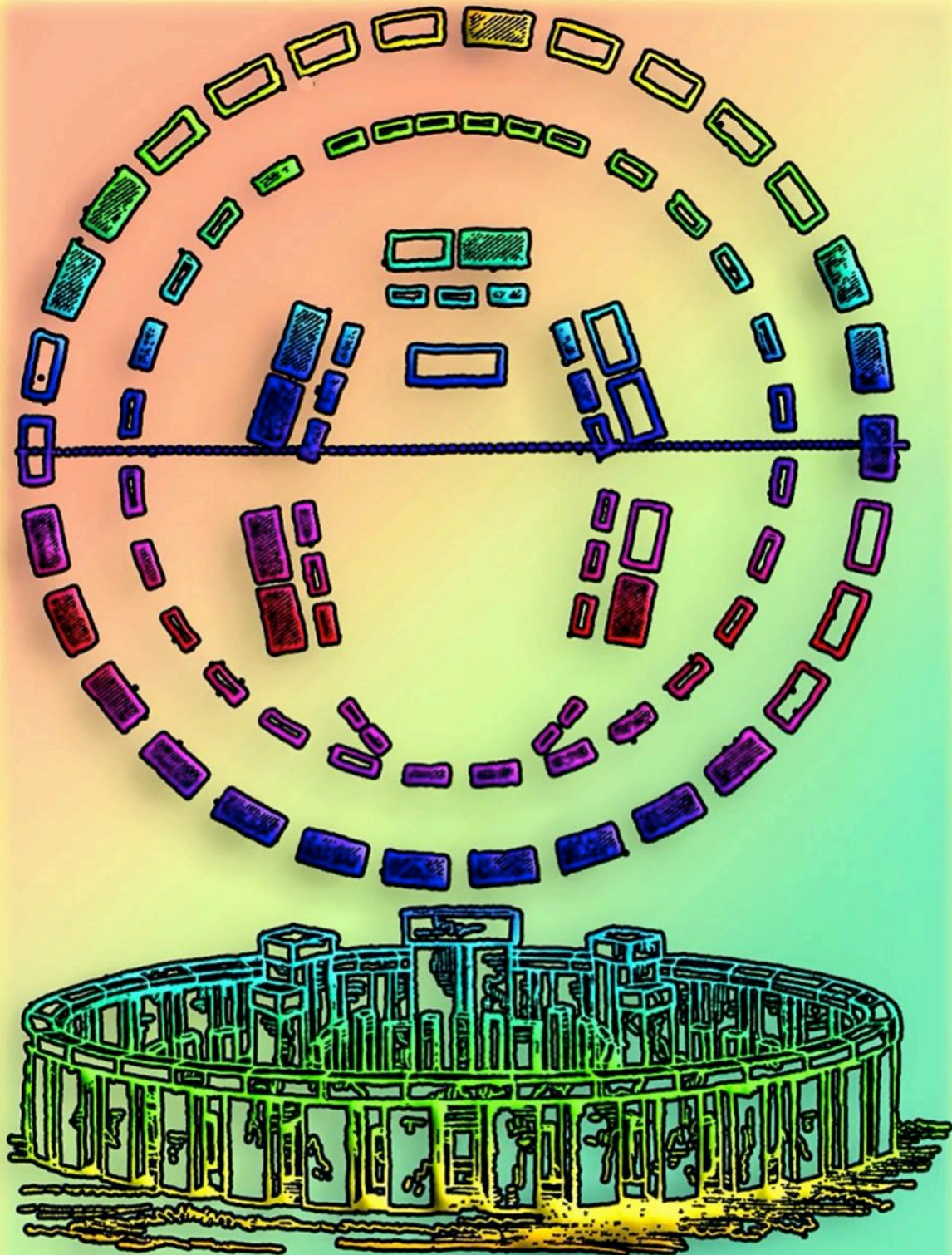
A priestess approached them. "This place,  
Stonehenge, was constructed  
To the measure and motion of the sun,  
The moon, and the stars.

I welcome you, for your hearts are pure and good.  
I tend to Britain's calendar and this is a great day,  
For the night and day are of equal length,  
Thus indicating the start of our new year.  
Come join our New Year's feast—  
You will witness the equinox upon awakening."

Upon awakening, they enter  
The astronomical wonder of stones at Stonehenge  
And rededicate their swords to St. Michael,  
St. George, to God, to justice, and the British way.

"We'll be back here by the day  
That the sun rises directly over the heel-stone,"  
Rallies the King, "but in his heart he suspects  
That they may never see this place again."





Stonehenge

{farewell Betelgeuse}

Now the night falls on my old friend,  
Betelgeuse, as we stand to its deathwatch  
To catch yet a few more dwindling light rays  
From the long forgotten sunny days.

The big plough, pointing to the universal hub  
Now tips and pours its cosmic contents  
Down upon us.

Some days, like today, the moon does not rise,  
But is up and stays up all night until sunrise.  
And if one has good luck, it's cold and clear of sky.

Then find the darkest of night places,  
A place that is so dark that you won't even  
See the rocks ripping into your new shoes.  
So dark that a lantern is needed  
To spot a brown rabbit.

And solitude is requisite as well as is the quiet,  
So that the river castle trumpets  
Can be heard echoing and harmonizing  
Up and down the valley.

Then, that's the time to cling to the earth  
And look down into the bottomless sky  
Of the last winter night

And say farewell to a favorite star  
That's setting for the season.

Can you own a star? Why not?  
Whether one is young or old,  
You can pick out a star to own.

Think of the wealth within a solar system—  
It can all be yours—you're rich beyond measure!  
And gain a friend at the same time.

Then, on some lonely night,  
When you sight your friend of a star,  
You will be cheered, for you will know  
That you are not alone.

I've tried to own Betelgeuse,  
That poor dying red star—  
Perhaps long since abandoned  
By the people of its planets  
As it expanded into their orbits.

Oh, I have tried to own Betelgeuse,  
Really I have, but I have found  
That it has now come to own me!

She is dying now, my star,  
Having given her all.  
Now, she takes—I give!  
Never lose you!

Planets already bejewel the upcoming  
Summer sky if you stay up late to see them.

Saturn and Jupiter escort Spica across the heavens,  
And the great Spring Kite sails high in the sky,  
Pulled along by Arcturus, while the Great Hook  
Dredges up islands from the sea in the south.  
Orion is behind the sun, its last whiff of influence.

The Great Bear had come out from  
The winter's lair of the Northern Crown.



A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring colorful stars and intricate swirl patterns in shades of green, blue, purple, and yellow. The background is a gradient from orange at the top to green at the bottom.

The stars are  
Not just white,  
They scintillate:

Sirius is blue,  
Its companion green;

Betelgeuse, red;  
Many, like Sol, yellow;

Arcturus, orange—  
All jewels constellate.



{Several Impossible Challenges}

Summer is warm but not yet indolent;  
It is the lovely month of June,  
Perhaps the greatest month of all  
Since many are free now, from school,  
And still excited about the upcoming summer.

Victorious knights return from both  
The Asia frontier and from the Unknown Sea.  
But sadly, St. Patrick has died,  
And all Ireland is in mourning.

The King receives a summons  
from the Avalon Lady of the Lake.

A King may receive a summons  
from but one person and place:  
The high priestess of Avalon—  
The Lady of the Lake herself,  
The distant power behind the  
fables and fortunes of Britain—  
The Mother Goddess  
Who reigns wholly and supreme,  
With the assistance of "The Merlyn".

If "The Merlyn" be the power behind the throne,  
Then the High Priestess of Avalon  
Is the power behind "The Merlyn".

And so our Percevale again takes  
The lower shield of the White Horse  
And slips unnoticed out of Camelot  
During the height of the summer festivities.

He rides to Avalon,  
A land forever shrouded  
In the mist that separates it  
From the world of mankind.

Many have been lost trying to cross  
Avalon's impenetrable swamps,  
So he waits patiently at the edge of the foggy lake.

He brings the Crimson Spear,  
For this is surely a gift from Avalon,  
As was Arthur's Excalibur  
And Prince Valiant's Flamberge  
(The Singing Sword, or "Flame Cutter".)

Avalon is flooded with water during summer,  
And with treacherous ice in winter.  
And there is always the fog,  
Which only the priestesses can wave aside,  
And they, and they alone,  
Know the underwater paths for the horses.

Many adventurers have fallen  
Into the gloomy depths of despair and death

Trying to find these trails,  
So Percevale awaits his guide.

Only once in a great while  
Is a King summoned to Avalon,  
For most of Avalon's effects are not direct,  
But long range, and even so, are often carried out  
By "The Merlyn" or "The Taliesin",  
The only residents of Avalon who are allowed  
To mingle with those of the mortal world.

The guide arrives, and Percevale, without a word,  
Steps into her canoe, for she is a novice  
And is not allowed to speak.

She waves the mist aside  
And they approach a castle in the water  
And then enter the Lady's mysterious chamber.

The Lady of the Lake appears,  
Old now and perhaps dying.  
"Thank you for your rescue of my daughters,  
Eve and Melody.  
They are my second and third born, respectively,  
And may someday have to rule this isle  
If for any reason my first-born cannot.  
Now, Percevale, name your pleasure  
And it shall be yours! Anything you want."





Percevale replies:

“I ask no pleasure but that of continued life.  
There is one thing, however—  
I should like to gain the power to destroy a witch,  
To free those poor souls who are enslaved by her!  
For I swore an oath to return there one day  
With the power to succeed.”

The Lady of the Lake—the Mother Goddess,  
Now finally growing old with age  
After many centuries,  
first speaks to our hero  
About age and the ancestry of the Round Table  
Before answering him:

“Here in Avalon,  
The Royal Line consists solely of women.  
Soon, my first-born daughter will take over for me,  
As someday, her first-born daughter  
Will take over for her.

Only a women can be sure of maternity—  
Paternity is never certain;  
Who knows who one’s father might be!  
Thus, a royal line of first-born sons of Kings  
Really does not make much sense for us,  
But we tolerate it in your world.

Here, we seldom even keep track of paternity,  
But, in your case, and in the case of many

Of the knights, an exception was made  
In order to try to save the world.

When I was young,  
Four hundred years ago,  
I played with Merlyn,  
Who was also a child at that time.

I happen to know that he and I  
Are the great great great grandparents  
Of yourself and of many of the knights,  
Making most of you third and fourth cousins—  
Indeed, Lancelot was born here as my last son,  
Thus his full name, Lancelot du Lac.

And so in this way we passed our godliness  
On to man in a last desperate hope  
Of ending the many centuries of the Dark Age.

“Merlyn” is not really a man’s name,  
Though it has come to mean his name—  
It is actually a title, “The Merlyn”,  
Of our only male officeholder,  
A position that Taliesin will soon inherit and hold.

The office of “The Merlyn” is the only link  
Between our two worlds,  
Aside from the rare summoning of a King.

I am the power behind "The Mersyn"—  
But I cannot interfere in everyday matters,  
for then man would not have his freedom, would he?  
We can only do long range planning,  
Thus your throne and your bleeding spear.  
We of Avalon are not actually gods, but Druids,  
Descended from the many 'gods' of old.  
We are all that is left of the great Atlantis!

Avalon is soon to be forever removed  
from the world of mankind—  
This we have known and feared—  
So, we have passed our legacy of love and goodness  
To you and your knightly cousins.

As for your witch, she was once one of us,  
But has since gone astray.  
That's how she knew about your bleeding spear  
And why she fears you.

As we may not interfere directly,  
We may not slay her.  
But, you have asked for the power to destroy her  
And so we will see that you have it  
In the form of your spear  
And in the strength of yours and Taliesin's minds.

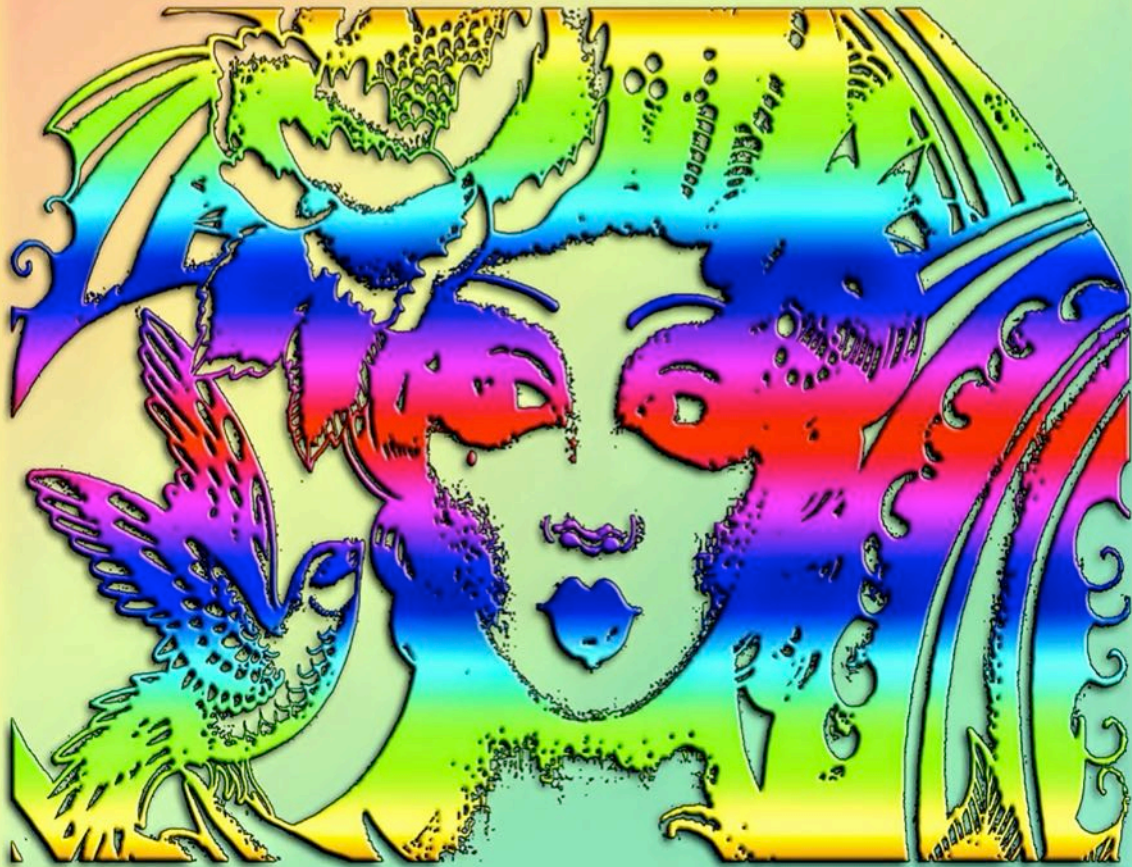
This but makes you her equal.  
Success or failure will still come

From within your own strength and goodness.  
But bring the Crimson Spear!

Indeed, you would be doing us and the world  
Quite a favor if you were to succeed; but beware,  
She once held the high title of Death-Crone,  
And she will undoubtedly place a curse upon you.

Just remember this: never give up hope,  
And know that every curse has an escape!

But how sad that she was once one of us  
And is now out of control!”



{The Curse of the Death-Crone}

As Percevale approaches the witch's land,  
He sees the shields and helmets of those  
Who came and died before him.

He clutches the Crimson Spear close  
And continues his approach.  
"Now, Bogar, you wait here  
And if I do not come out within two days,  
Then come in after me."

Percevale feels the watch of gloom  
As he enters the territory of the witch.

Knowing that he is being watched,  
He does not turn around to alert the watcher,  
But slides quickly and unbeknownst into the woods.  
Talesin glides noiselessly,  
Silent and invisible in Percevale's mind!

He peers in a window and sees a pitiful sight.  
The witch's slaves are from  
The world of the deformed and misshapen—  
Those who are most easily enslaved.  
Plans are made and a good night's sleep is taken.

In the morning a huge menacing giant  
Blocks Percevale's path,

But there is something very human and caring,  
Yet guarded, seen in the giant's eyes.  
Apparently the giant is too large  
To fully feel the effects of the witch's drugs,  
And so Percevale speaks to the giant softly:  
"You could easily escape this spell and be free!"

The giant replies: "You are correct;  
I stay only to protect my friends from further harm,  
And indeed I will help you kill the witch  
If you will but insure the safety of my friends!"

"I am King of Britain  
And the safety of all my subjects concerns me.  
Just keep your bewitched friends in check  
While I do battle with the witch  
And soon you shall all be free or I'll die trying."

Now Percevale faces the witch, but not alone,  
For Taliesin has joined with him in mind,  
And the bleeding spear is at hand.

"'Tis the accursed Crimson Spear from Avalon!"  
She cries. "Take it from my sight,  
I can not bear to look at it!"

But Percevale holds it all the more firmly  
As she tries to wrench it from his grasp  
With the powers of her mind.

She fills his mind's eye with evil sights of monsters,  
But ever still does he hold the red shaft;  
It is now bleeding profusely  
And its blood is pooling on the ground.

For a day and a night,  
The battle of the minds continues,  
Percevale and Taliesin barely holding their own  
And growing nevermore weary,  
Feeling at each instant  
That they cannot last another moment.

Meanwhile, no potions are being dispensed  
To the enslaved; they drink but the purest of water  
And so they are slowly regaining control.

Towards morning, the battle draws to its climax  
As Avalon's grandson is assaulted  
With every trick known to sorcery  
By Avalon's daughter gone astray;  
But, Taliesin has studied under the master Merlyn  
And Percevale has the strength of ten  
Because his heart is pure.

And then it is over.  
As the witch crumples to the ground,  
Defeated at last.



She finds those last ounces of strength  
That come at the time of dying  
Using them to place the curse of the Death-Crone:

“Percevale, from death’s doorstep,  
I, the Death-Crone,  
Curse you with my last breath;  
I curse you with the worst misfortune  
That may befall a man:

That you will never find love  
Or be loved ever again—

Until rocks flow like water,

Until the day comes that the sun does not rise,

Until the new moon is seen with the naked eye,

Until the planet Mercury is seen at high noon,

Until fire is seen in water,

Until it snows in Cisalpine Gaul on a summer day,

Until all of the above events happen  
On the same day within a month from this very day!

In other words,  
You will never ever find love or be loved,

Since, when these events do not happen,  
for they cannot happen and be seen by you,  
You will not only be unloved nor able to give love,  
But you will also find the world to be filled  
With hate towards you, and you will soon die  
And forever wear the foolscap of eternal shade,  
for no man can live for long without love!"

The witch dies, the King is cursed,  
But the enslaved are free!

{No Hope for the Hopeless}

Bogar, forever dedicated,  
Takes what is left of his master back to Camelot.  
Bogar notes the King's despair  
And so Percevale tells him the tale of the curse.

"I shall never succeed, Bogar,  
for most of the witch's challenges are impossible;  
That's the joke of it, I guess.  
She just threw in one easy one,  
'When rocks flow like water' to give me false hope,  
for I do know of a place  
Where rocks flow like water.

But no one has ever seen the new moon.  
Of course, the full moon is easily seen because  
It is completely lit on the side facing us

And rises when the sun sets and is therefore  
Up all night, but the new moon is just the opposite:  
It rises in the morning, is up all day,  
Sets at evening,  
And is lit only on the side away from us.  
It has never been seen, Bogar!

Oh, we have seen the slivers  
Of the very young and the very old moons,  
But the new moon gives no light at all,  
So, even if we see but a thin crescent moon,  
Then by definition, it is not the new moon.  
Even if we knew where to look for it in the sky,  
Which we don't, there would be the glare of the sun.

Even the stars, which do give off light,  
Cannot be seen in the daytime,  
Even in areas of the sky not close to the sun.

And Mercury, being so close to the sun,  
Can only be seen just before sunrise  
Or just after sunset, but never at high noon!

As for snow in late June or July in Southern Gaul,  
It is not likely and has never occurred.

And I have not yet known a day  
When the sun did not rise.  
Even on cloudy days  
We know that the sun has risen,

for there is light behind the clouds.

And fire in water! It cannot be.  
Water conquers fire, they cannot coexist.

for any of the above to happen is impossible.  
for all of them to happen on the same day  
Within a month is beyond impossible,  
Yet, I will not give up hope for I know  
from Avalon that all curses have an escape.”

Percevale spends the day  
In the archives of Camelot with Taliesin.  
Then they spend all night  
In the Merlyn Tower Room,  
Where they pore over old manuscripts  
full of diagrams,  
But only this much becomes known:  
The new moon is to appear in two weeks—  
This fixes the day;  
And there is only one place  
Where the rocks flow like water—  
This fixes the place!

There is hardly time to get there,  
So the King immediately leaves for Iceland.





### {The Ice Maiden}

The chronicles covering the first week of  
The journey have not survived the ravages of time,  
So we find ourselves already close to Iceland.

The sea is glorious and the air is fresh and pure.  
We do know that during the journey north,  
The twilight lasted longer and longer each day.

There is not a moment to waste, however,  
Percevale spots a vessel in distress behind him,  
And for just a moment he wonders  
If he should take the time to come to its aid.

But, there is no real choice, so he turns back  
And although her ship goes under,  
He manages to pull her from the depths  
And spends over an hour reviving her.

And, even when revived,  
her lips will not part from his,  
for they have tasted each other  
And found it to be sweet.

“I am cursed, you cannot love me,”  
Says the Ice Maiden finally, named Wheryse.

“I am sent to remind you  
Of that which is forbidden to you!  
I have no choice; the spell overwhelms!

You should have let me drown;  
Then you might have had some peace from success.  
From now on, everyone you touch  
Will catch the curse until  
The world fills with hate and destroys itself.”

“So this is how it is going to be,”  
laments Percevale.  
“How I shall hate to give up life’s wonders  
When I am gone!”



{The Greatest Day on Earth}

But, this is to be the day of the new moon;  
At least there is a chance, thinks Percevale.

They arrive on the shore of Iceland,  
And, on this day, as on every day for a month  
Either way in this northern land,  
The sun does not rise,  
For it did not set the day before.

Just before noon, strange bands of shadows  
Begin to rapidly cross the land  
And Percevale feels that perhaps the end is near.  
The ground begins to shake and heave  
For a few moments and then all is silent,  
So very silent as to strike one dumb.

Something terrible seems to be happening.  
Grazing animals look for shade trees  
And lie down to sleep.

Then, about noontime,  
The shadow of darkest night covers the land  
As the moon begins to kiss the sun and cover it—  
It is a solar eclipse!

Merlyn's old notes in the archive were accurate!  
Thank the gods for the old wizard!





During the seven minutes of total darkness,  
Percevale sees a black disk in the sky,  
Surrounded by faint wisps of flame.

It is, of course the new moon in all her black glory;  
Indeed, the new moon can only be seen  
During a solar eclipse, and never at any other time.

And there near the sun is a bright 'star'.  
It can only be the planet Mercury!  
Yes, there it is, in plain sight, at high noon.  
And farther out, Venus can be seen!

Now the ground begins to really shake, and  
Percevale hurries to his ship with the Ice Maiden.

They leave Iceland but see the volcano erupt;  
Rocks are flowing to the sea like water!  
But, the water puts out the fiery flow  
And so they do not see fire in water,  
But just a lot of steam.

Then a tremendous plume  
Of smoke and debris is sent up into the sky  
And is carried south by the unusual winds  
Born of the marriage of summer warmth  
And ice cold air brought on by the blockage  
Of the sun's rays by the dense volcanic ash.

The spontaneous cold front sweeps south to Gaul



On the reversed upper winds,  
Bringing the darkness of the ashen sky with it.  
As no sunlight can penetrate,  
The air below grows colder and colder,  
And what would have been rain now turns to snow  
Over Cisalpine Gaul for a brief time  
Before the westerly winds can disperse  
The volcanic cloud around the earth.

That evening the sun sinks low, but does not set.  
On the water is the glitter path of that fiery ball—  
And so we have fire in water!

The sun has kissed the moon,  
And Percevale gathers the Ice Maiden  
Into his arms and kisses her,  
His capacity for love far from dead,  
But growing stronger every minute  
Of this glorious day  
As both of their curses fall by the wayside.

(Taken from the Celtic Chronicles,  
found in an iron box beneath an Abbey.)





The Greatest Day on Earth

{The Last Curse on Earth}

Percevale returns home and sits down  
To hear the Giant's tale and the giant begins:

"The witch placed a curse on me as well.  
I will forever roam the earth in sadness  
If I do not accomplish the following  
By the end of this day:

I must see the sun set three times in one day,  
And, I must, during daylight,  
Create a dark space behind me that never ends.

What will I do? I cannot stop the sun  
And raise it up again,  
Nor can I cause the absence of light behind me  
And into the infinite depths of space!"

Day is nearly done and so the horizon  
Is rising to meet the bloodshot eye of day.

Percevale quickly leads the giant to the shore  
Where a small piece of low hilly land  
Juts out into the sea.  
They face to the west and view the setting sun,  
Now but a symbol of the sad giant's dying hopes.

The sun drops though some clouds

And is bright again,  
But half of it is already below the horizon!

“Look at your shadow, giant!  
How long is your shadow at sunset or sunrise?  
What is shortest at noon grows longer  
As the afternoon wears on, until finally,  
It stretches forever behind you,  
Since you are directly between the sun  
And that which is behind you.”

“That is fine Percevale, but the sun is nearly set  
And will certainly not rise again until the morrow.  
I must still see three sunsets!”

“No time to explain now, giant.  
Quick! Lie down on the ground  
And see your first sunset today  
As the top sliver of the sun falls below,  
And is extinguished by, the horizon.  
See! There it goes.

Now, quickly, stand up to your great height  
And what do you see?”

“I see the tip of the sun again!”

“And your second sunset of the day, giant?”

“Yes! I see it, and another green flash as well!”

"Now run up yonder hill and bring up the sun again  
So that it may set three times in a day!"

The gleeful giant runs up the hill in great leaps  
And turns to see the sun set three, four, even five  
More times, each sunset lasting but a few seconds.







## The Holographic Universe

When a tree falls in the forest and there's  
No one around to hear it, does it make  
A sound? No, for there is no ear to turn  
The sound waves into sound.

Nor is there a smell, for there is no nose  
For the odorous molecules to attach to.  
Nor has it any color, for there is  
No retina to decode the light frequencies.

What does it look like, then? It doesn't look  
Like anything, for there is no brain to  
Put it all together by detecting  
Form, color, texture, size, taste, smell or vision.

Since the entropy of a black hole is known  
To depend on the surface area of the  
Event horizon and NOT on its volume,  
Then our third dimension MUST BE a projection.

A projected illusion, as in a hologram,  
May still be used as it were really there  
Since we can make sense of it, so to speak,  
But, in truth, the third dimension does not exist.

Thus, apparently separate particles,  
Like created photon pairs, copy the other  
When one is changed, because, in truth, they are  
Still the same thing in the projector room.



If the universe is holographic,  
Then the tree in the forest, whether seen or not,  
Is, at heart, an interference pattern  
Brought to life only when we tune it in.

This is the mystery of the realness  
Of sleeping dreams revealed: we tune in to  
The interference patterns, whether awake  
Or asleep, to bring alive the reality projected.

Everything connects to everything else  
Through overlapping interference patterns,  
And so nothing is separate at all, as it seems,  
But is one large all-encompassing whole.

Memory, too, seems to be holographic,  
Residing everywhere in the brain,  
Every piece associated with others related,  
Instantly broadcasting all the connections.

Every part of a hologram contains the whole,  
The whole universe contained within a  
Grain of sand, all eternity within a moment,  
The universe rumbling when an electron vibrates.

We are part and parcel of everything—  
We are the cosmos; we are life; we are love;  
We are all that is; We are the creator  
Of the dance as well as the dancer.

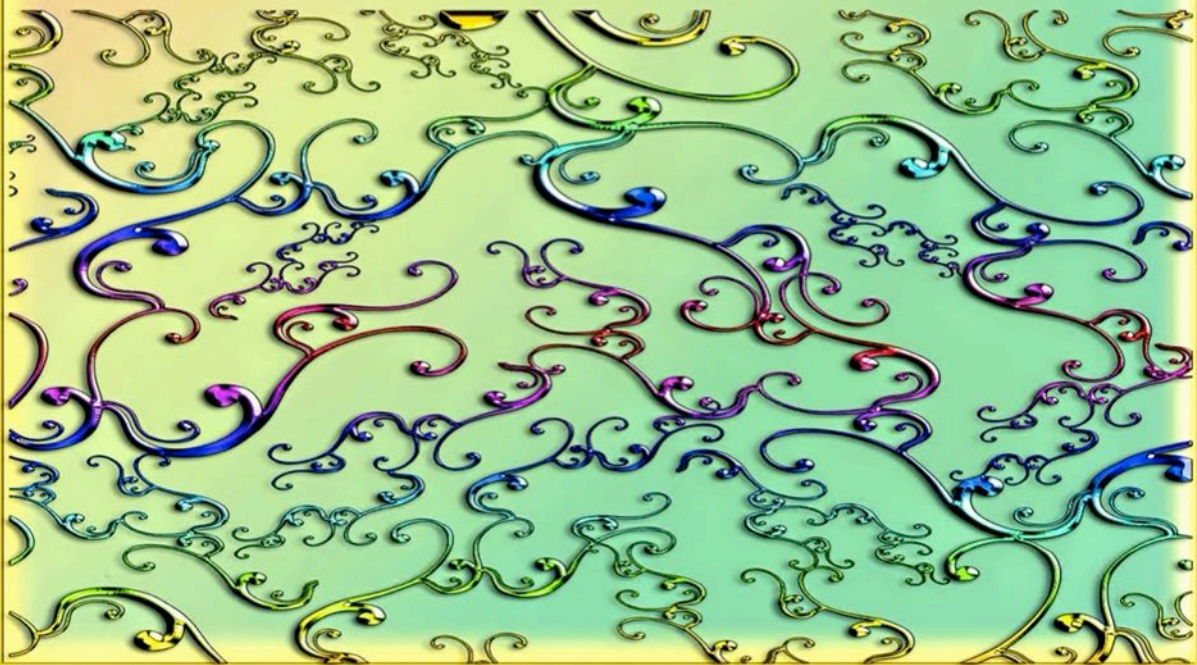


Whether the past is recorded and accessible  
As part of the holographic whole is not known  
Or whether the other two dimensions are  
Projected, as well, but perhaps we shall see.

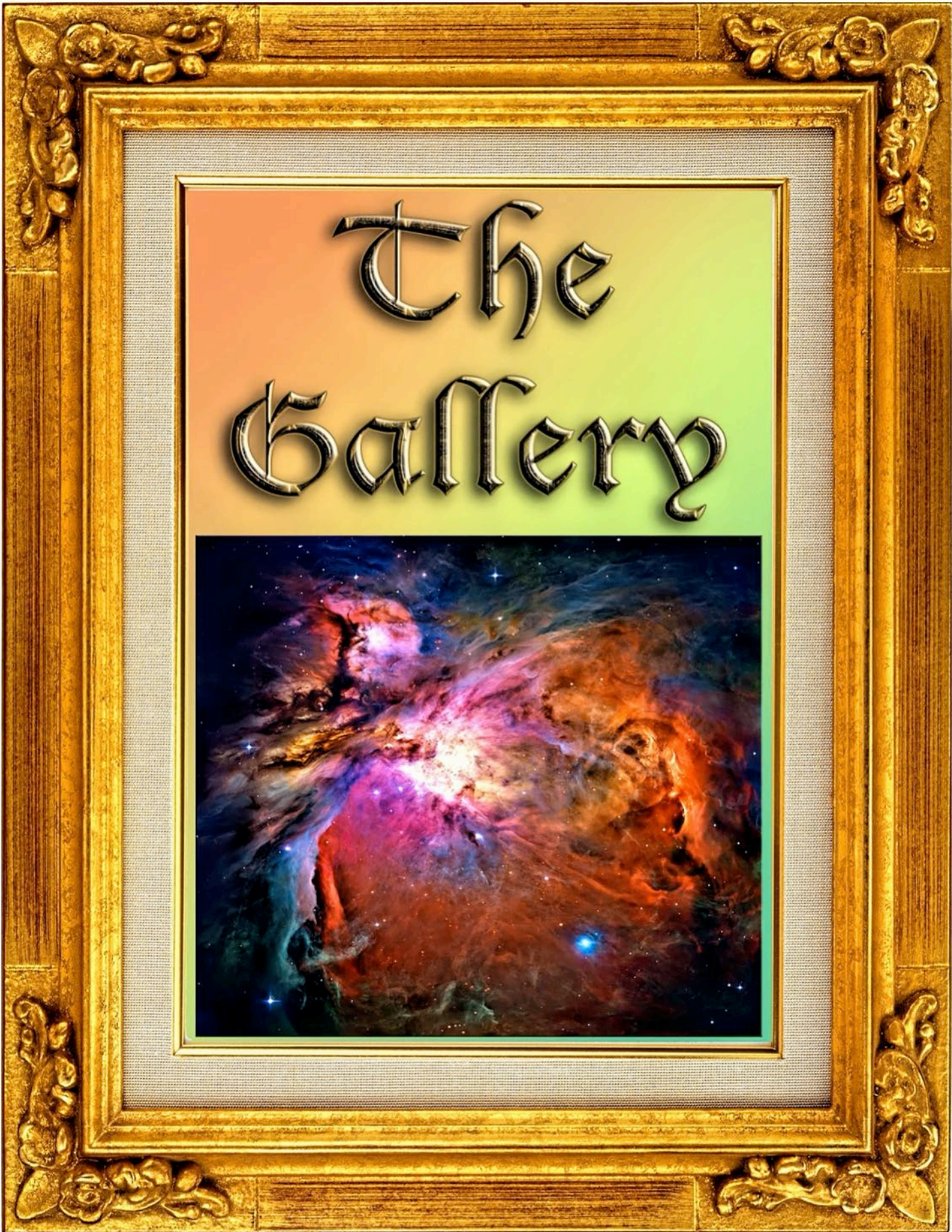
This then is the secret of the universe,  
Knowing of that which underlies all reality:  
fundamental, absolute, indestructible,  
Omnipresent, indeterminate, and all pervasive.

Why absolute and fundamental? Because  
It is made of one piece—itsself,  
And therefore indestructible, and eternal, too,  
And makes up all that there is, everywhere.

The Infinite may radiate through a matrix,  
Using Information or Energy to create  
The Cosmic Background antenna which broadcasts  
Interference patterns of virtual reality.





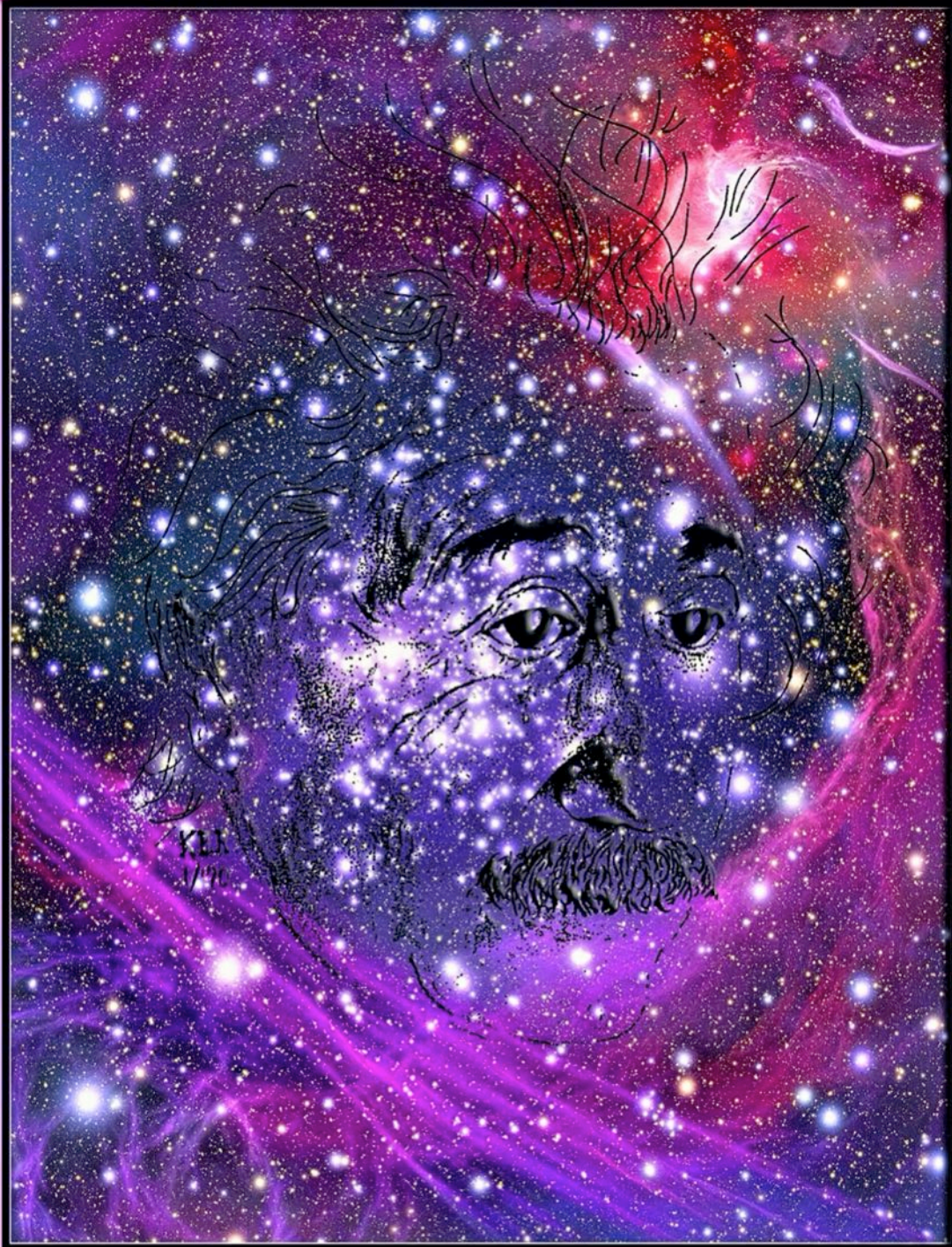




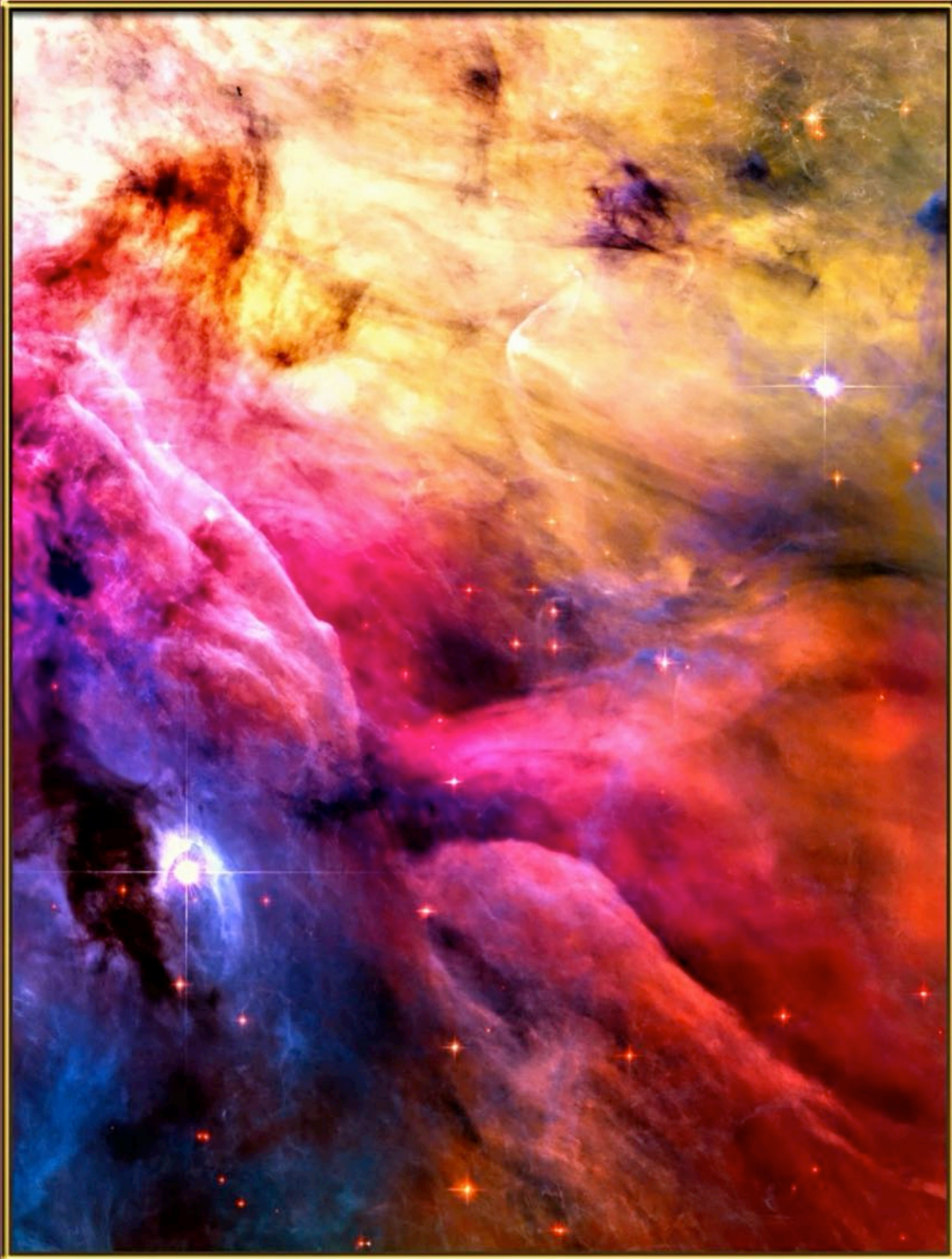
*Stars generate the lower elements;  
Supernovae generate the higher ones.*

*Atoms form the molecules that lead to  
Life's complexity—from simplicity.*

*Life from the Stars*



Albert Einstein



Orion Nebula

The Infernal Regions

Hellholes hurl thousand light-year jets of fear,

In Centaurus, cross'd the galactic sphere,



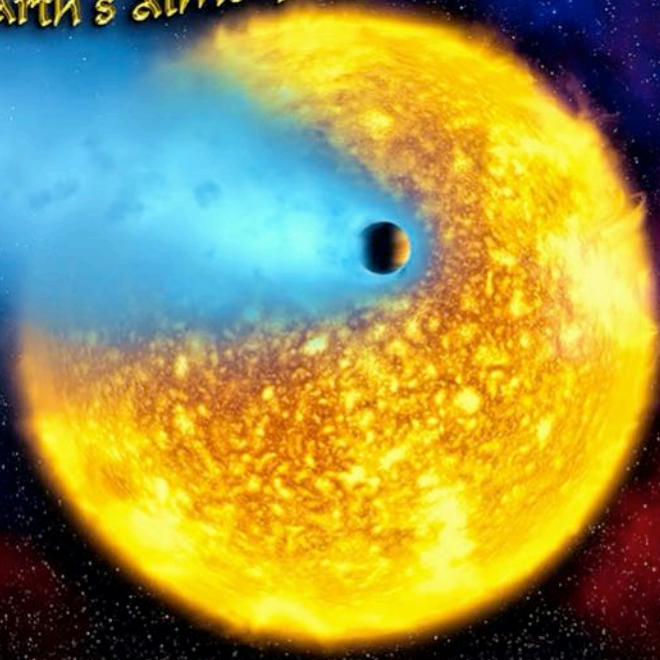
Supermassive darkling beasts devour all...

Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.

A Black Hole

Finale

Beyond the pale, aft the last perfect day,  
The Earth's atmosphere incinerates away.



Mercury/Venus now within the sun,  
For the Crimson Giant is on his way.

Sol, having become a red Giant,  
Devours the Earth.

# The Creation of Our Universe

(Yin/Yang Gears)



Anti  
Matter

Uncle  
Matter



You Are Here

A Theory as Good as Any

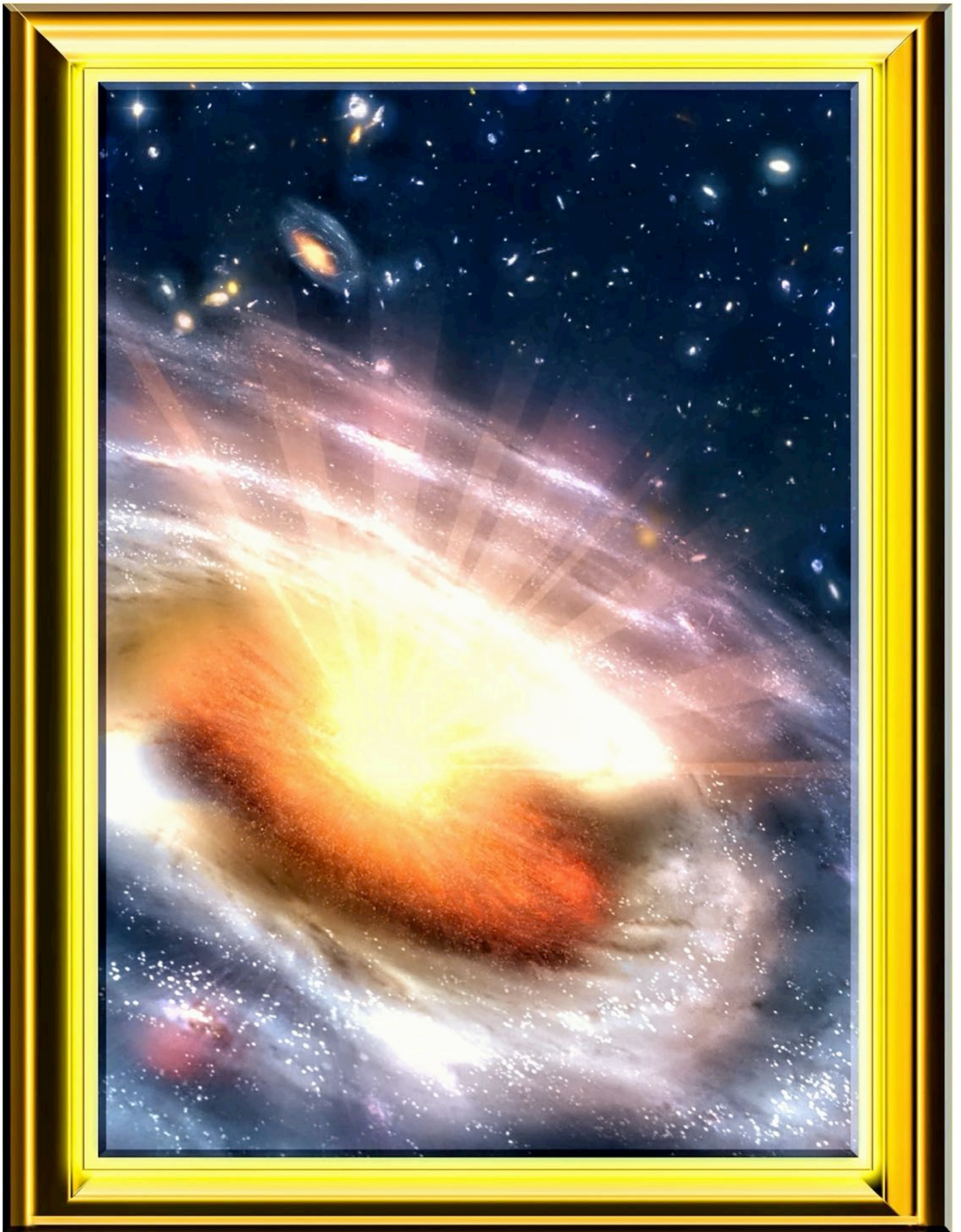


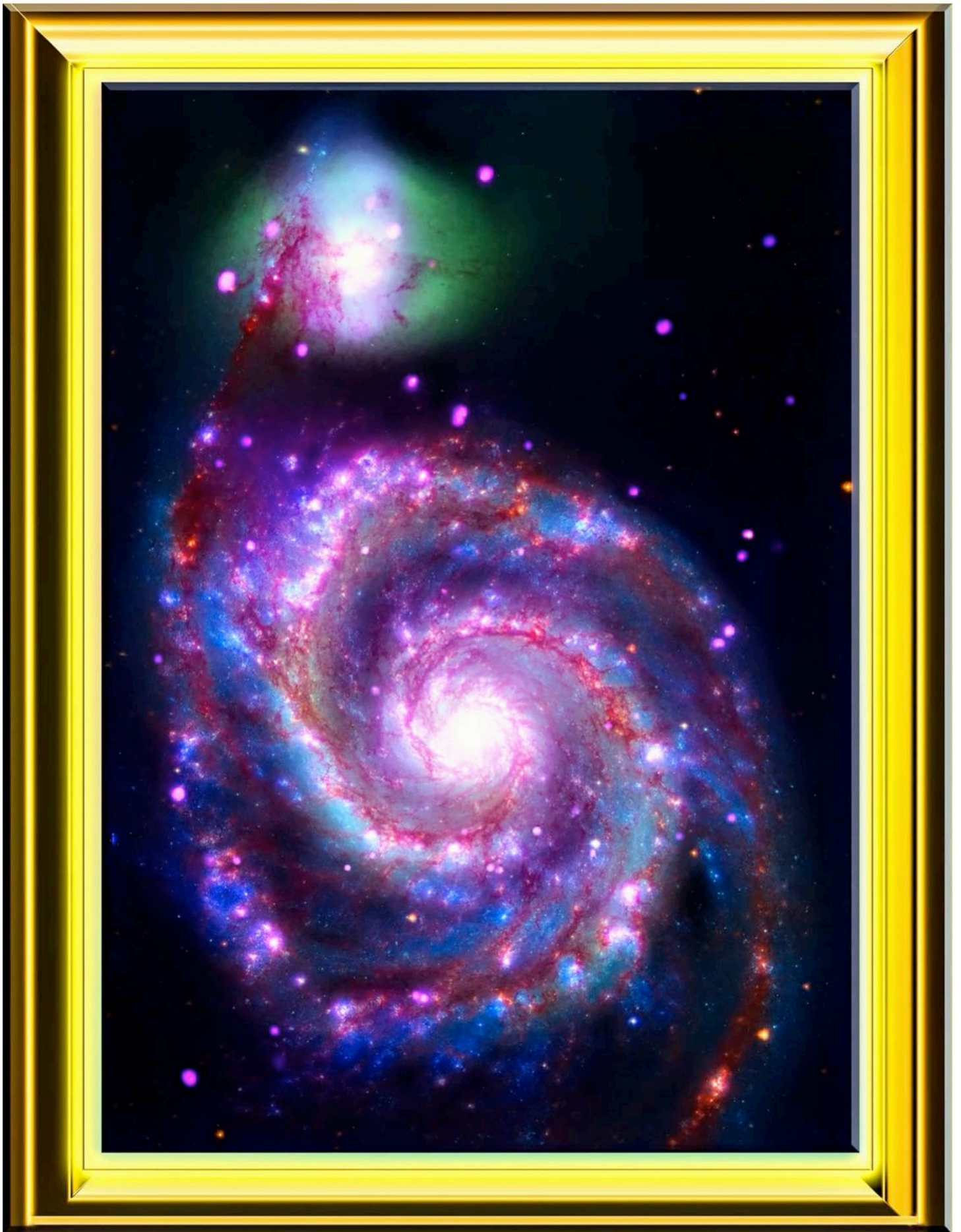


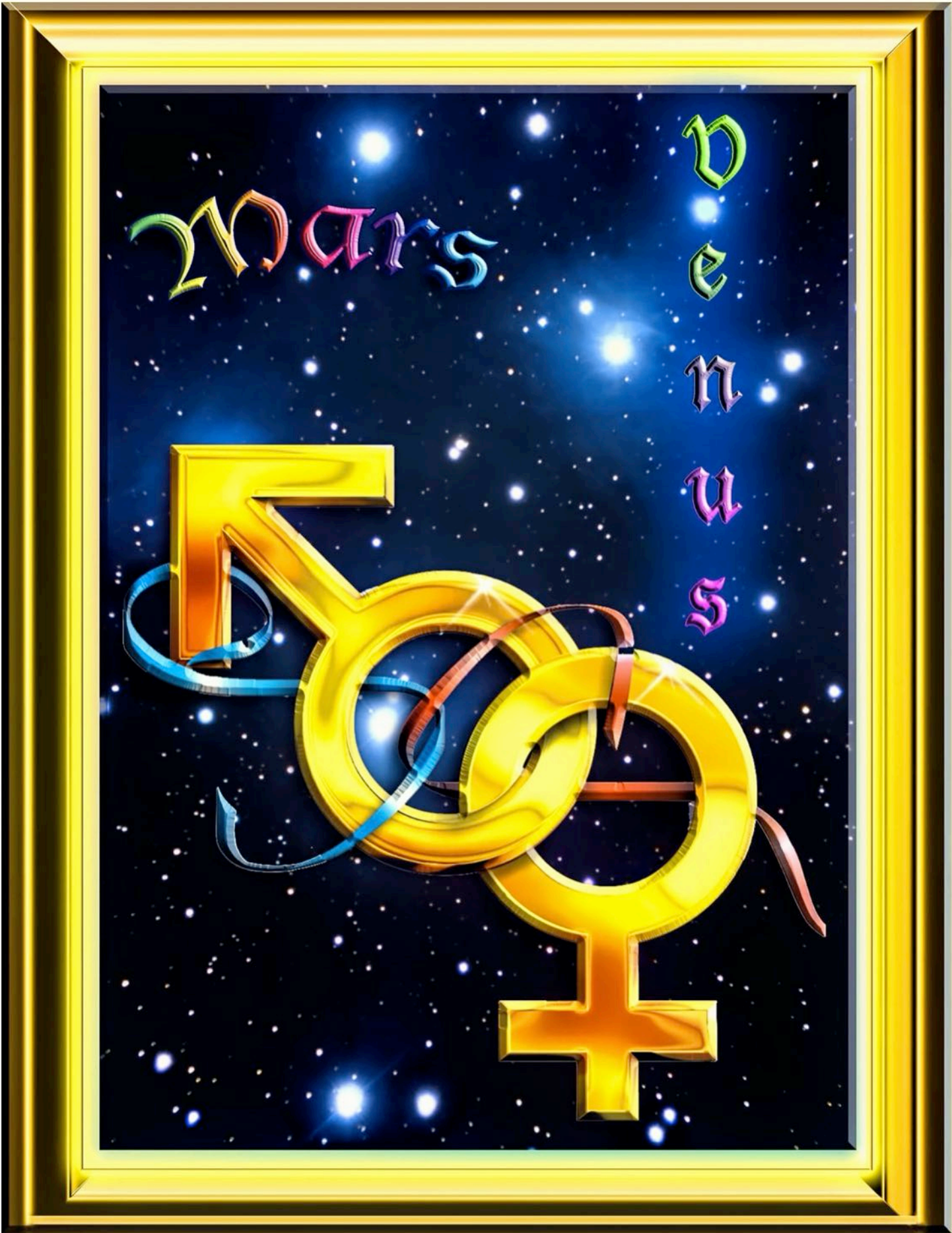
Miss Universe













wo[man]

## THE FOREVER FIELDS OF REALITY

Michael Faraday introduced  
One of the most radical ideas in science.  
They thought that he had,  
For once, gone too far.

Particles became rather irrelevant,  
Being mere spigots through which forces flowed.

The real stuff of reality was the forces flowing,  
The particles being only the source.

The burden of reality had shifted,  
For the space between particles became primary.

Particles were only the intersection  
Of the forces that wove the universe.

Forces create stresses in space,  
A superhighway  
Of how to get from here to there.

An electron wiggles in the sun,  
Tweaking the E/M field;  
The ripples travel for 8 minutes  
Then tickles an electron in your eye.



You see the light.  
Light is a tweak.

Physics has never been the same since.

The field concept became real,  
The idea being the same as the thing,  
Fudging forever the difference  
Between something and nothing;

Yet, fields are made of something real,  
For they have energy.

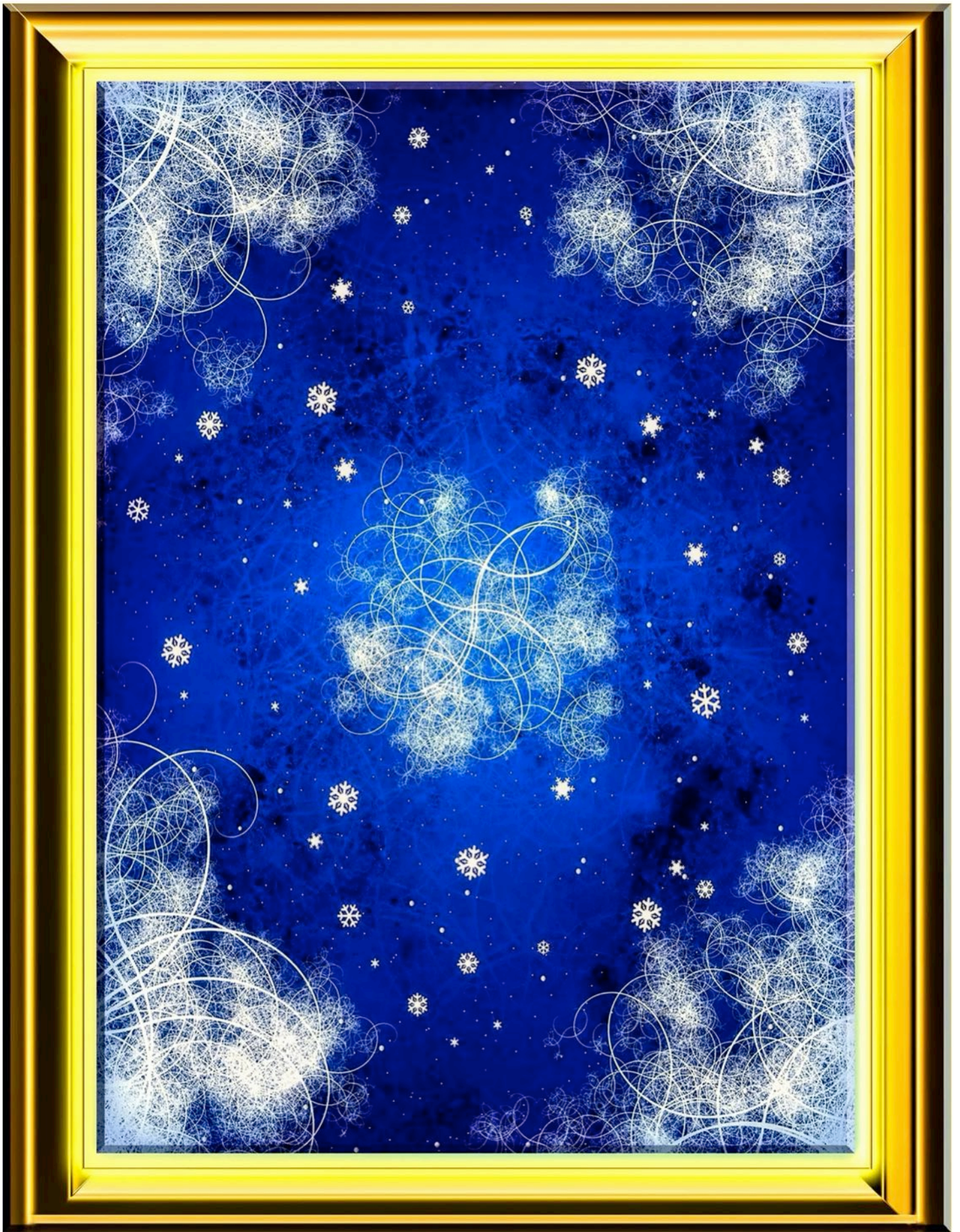
Einstein called the field  
"A change in the concept of reality...  
The most profound and fruitful one  
That has come to physics since Newton."

Matter, then, is simply a place where  
Some of the field happens to be concentrated.

Matter travels like a wave in a rope,  
But the rope itself does not travel.

The field is not so much  
Something in space,  
But more like of space.





This is why all particles of a type are identical;  
For they are manifestations  
Of their fields everywhere the same.

The field takes on a life of its own,  
Even when the object that created it is gone.  
The traveling kinks continue;  
They propagate endlessly.

Where the vacuum is free of matter  
It is not free of field, but filled with it.

Energy and matter are the same stuff,  
But it takes a whole lot of energy  
To make matter.

Field is the bridge  
Between matter and empty space.

Fields can't go away,  
As they're part of the structure of the vacuum;  
When in their quietest possible state  
They are the vacuum.

This is about as close to nothing  
As anything ever gets.

Forces act on things,  
While matter is acted upon.  
You can walk through a field,  
But you cannot walk through a wall.

Kinks in fields can pile atop one another;  
Kinks in matter hold each other at arm's length.

Yet, somehow, beneath it all,  
They are kindred spirits, perhaps.

Faraday made fields real;  
Quantum mechanics made them magic—  
And lumpy—the currency of QM.

Everything melts, via uncertainty,  
When we try to measure a quantum property.

But this, too, means that no quantum property  
Can ever be zero, for zero is a precise amount,  
That is, motion can never ever cease.

Try to pin down an electron,  
Such as putting it in a box,  
And it increasingly moves about,  
Ever faster.

It is heads or tails while it is still spinning?  
Well, it is just a fuzzy 'both' yet neither.

In a way, QM eliminated  
The very idea of zero  
From the physical world,  
As 'nothing' never sleeps,  
But is ever up to something.

(The Loan Shark)

An unusual track was found in a cloud chamber  
That Carl Anderson was using  
To watch the trajectories of cosmic rays  
Streaming in from space.

The track was like that of an electron—  
Except that it curved backwards  
Under the influence of a magnetic field.  
It was the positron, now used in the PET.

A particle and its antiparticle annihilate,  
Giving back, in the process, the energy it took  
To create them in the first place.

Do they live on borrowed time and energy,  
A creation 'ex nihilo' all over the universe?

Can they sneak out of the vacuum  
So long as they snuck back in again  
Before you noticed?

"What is the point?"  
Thought Richard Feynman,  
"Created and annihilated,  
Annihilated and created—  
What a waste of time."

They come and go like dreams,  
The lighter ones, like electrons,  
Popping out more often.

They are the ghosts of the yet unborn.  
The road from 'nothing' to something  
Goes in both directions.

With enough energy they can become real.

The so-called 'vacuum' is creative.  
The field fluctuates this way and that,  
But, on average, the net energy is 'zero'.

The once melted vacuum fell and froze,  
Gaining structure,  
Such as when water becomes ice.

## Nature's Commands

1. Nothing was ever created, that is, meaning the ultimate underlying basis, because it couldn't be made from a total Nothing, for, Nothing, a lack of anything, has no 'where' nor 'when' nor properties to be productive. Not that there couldn't have been a total lack of anything, but that was not the case, and if it was it would still be the case. Even if 'nothing' had some capability to divide into plus and minus, it still would have always been there always.
2. The ultimate underlying basis was the natural state of affairs, 'forever'. There was no creation. As such, there was no creator or Creator.
3. Nature ever proceeds from the simple to the more complex and composite: it goes to quarks and electrons to protons to stars to the lower atoms being emitted to the higher atoms from supernovae to molecules to cells to life to mind to consciousness.
4. Of how nature works, in every way, nature may eventually tell. It is that we may find out or not, but it not to be found anyway else, for Nature is the embodiment and result of what ever was and still is in its various arrangements of complex composites.
5. We are free to be, within our form; plus, existence must be dealt with first and foremost, over essence.

## STAR STUFF

How could we ever know  
The composition of a star?  
It's not like we could go there  
To collect a sample.

"Impossible," it was thought.

Then starlight shadows were found that  
Spelled out a complete list of the ingredients—  
A quantum mechanical bar code of its elements.

## CURRENT COMPLICATIONS

Life is complicated,  
It taking thousands of different  
Types of molecules to make a person,  
Because it has been  
Pieced together by evolution,  
Borrowing whatever worked  
From whatever ingredients  
Were handy to pull off the shelf at the time.

## CONVERSATIONS

The Universe whisper its secrets  
To us from the CMBR, when light was born,  
And before, if gravitational waves appear.

X-rays shriek with high pitched terror;  
The infrared rains down its stories;  
Gravity runs on through everything.

Cosmic rays pound us,  
Even through the shelter of the sky;  
Neutrinos slice through us,  
Leaving no wound;  
Gamma rays tickle us;  
Dark matter tugs on us mysteriously.

We need the universal translator.

## THE TRADE-OFF

Single-celled creatures never die  
But live on as their offspring by dividing;  
Whereas, via sexual reproduction,  
The parents eventually die.

Death is the price we pay for sex.



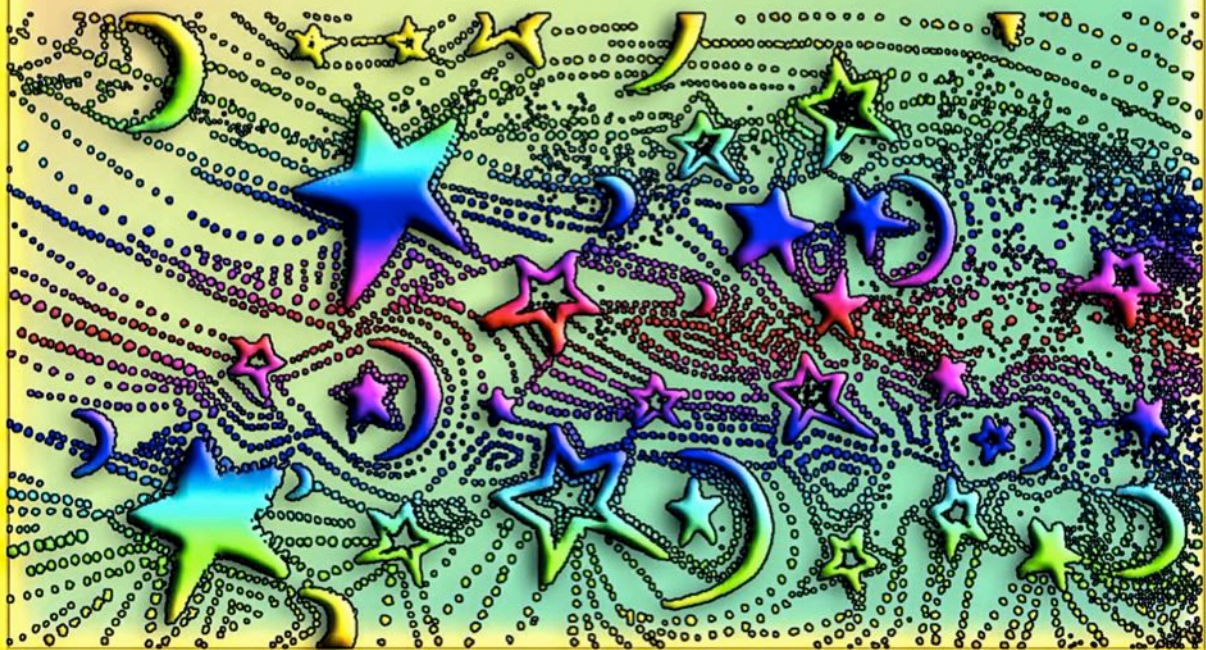
## TRUTH OR HAPPENSTANCE?

John Allen Paulos said that  
"In reality, the most astonishingly  
Incredible coincidence imaginable  
Would be the complete absence of coincidence."

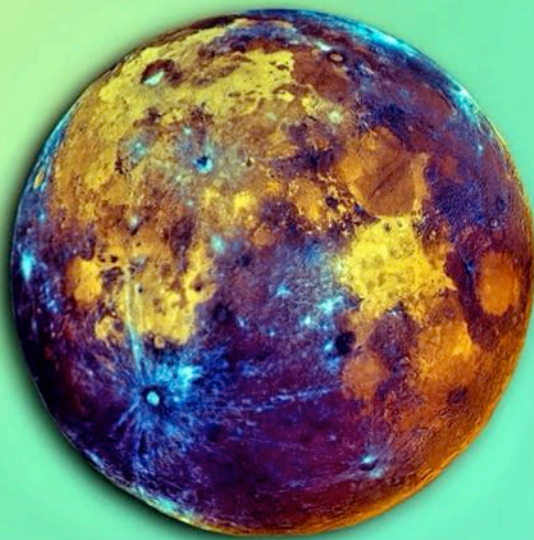
Einstein was bothered by the fact  
That gravity and inertia balance out exactly,  
Allowing a cannon ball to fall  
At the same rate as a marble.

Was it a happenstance or a truth?

He concluded that gravity and inertia  
Are aspects of a bigger picture—  
The curvature of space-time.



# The Earth and the Moon







— Bosom's Pearl —

In a magnetic dance I whirl and twirl,  
Attracted to you, the liveliest world.  
'Round you as a necklace I'm all aswirl—  
Wear me as thy crystalline gem imperaled.

— Worldly Romance —

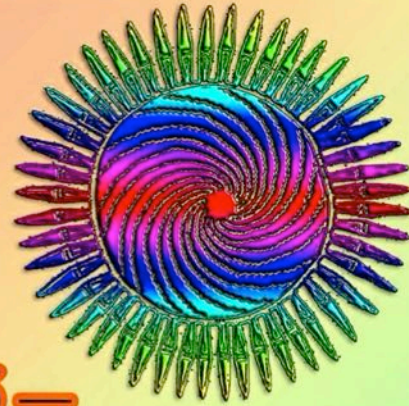
As moon and Earth we bathe in radiance,  
Cleansing our hearts in love's grand alliance.  
'Round and 'round each other we dance, entranced,  
Revolving in the whirl of our dalliance.

— Heart-Light —

Thy romantic beam, like Cupid's arrow,  
Pierces my heart to kill my sorrow,  
Injecting life and love for tomorrow;  
Henceforth I'll shine with this light I borrow.







— Involved —

As twin planets, our orbits must convolve—  
Into each our tidal motions dissolve.  
Around our common center we revolve—  
The focus from which our passions evolve.

— Unconditional Love —

As twin planets, each other's way we pave,  
With the push-pulse of the graviton wave.  
We're captured, but not as each other's slave,  
For to the sun our orbits are concave.

— Swell Tide —

A magnetic beam emanates from thee,  
Attracting me, holding me, kissing me.  
Tidal love washes freely over us,  
Linking you and me for eternity.





— Moon Glow —

Basking warmly in the reflected light,  
I'm bright, oh, so radiant in your sight!  
In the love and light of your spirit bright,  
I need not ever face the endless night.

— Electromagnetic Waves —

Your vibrations travel without a sound,  
Coming from all directions to surround.  
Your affection touches me 'round and 'round,  
Closely binding me to you—I'm love-bound!

— Intersecting Circles —

We are as different as midnight and noon,  
Yet drawn close by the force of Earth and moon.  
As lovers, we merge in a sweet eclipse  
When world meets world as a kiss on our lips.





*As lovers, we merge  
In a sweet eclipse  
When world meets world  
As a kiss on our lips.*

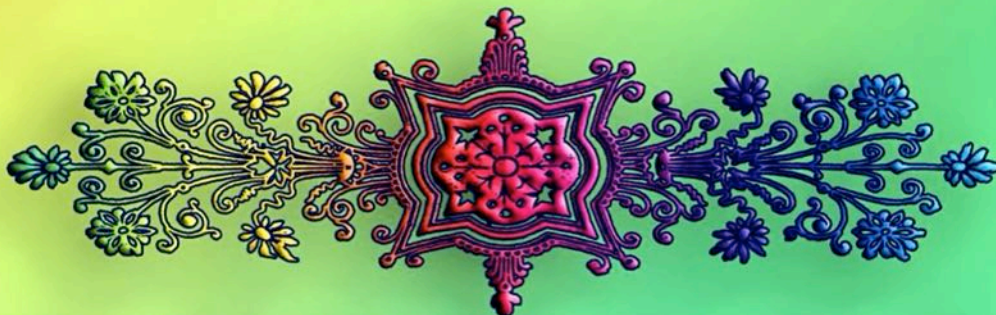


Days are the cyclic units  
Of time's pearl,

Beads worn round in  
The necklace of the months...

They distance themselves,  
Like night echoes,

Into the rosary  
Of the seasons.







Earth couldn't be farther out in space, alone;  
In all directions it rolls along, unknown.  
Look at the stars piercing the depths of time:  
They beckon, warm and welcome—the fires of home.





*In Earth's realm, via megalithic poems.*

*Man proximates Immortality's own*

*Through messages sent as monumental stones.*

*Like dolmens, menhirs, stone circles, and tombs.*



*— The End —*